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COMEDY
OF
THE BROTHERS.

By RICHARD CUMBERLAND, Esq.

ADAPTED FOR THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

As performed at the Theatres-Royal
COVENT-GARDEN AND DRURY-LANE.

Regulated from the Prompt Books,

By Permission of the Managers.

WITH

REMARKS BY THE AUTHOR.

The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas are omitted
in the Representation

Cooke's Edition.

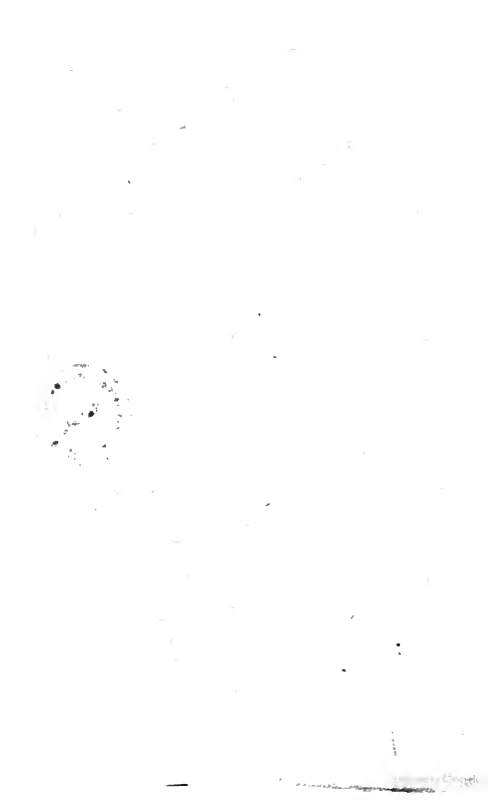


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TO HIS GRACE

THE DUKE OF GRAFTON,

MY LORD,

I BEG leave to recommend a trifling performance to your notice; nothing but my venturing to approach your Grace on this occasion without introduction, could excuse my addressing you without a name: by this kind of sophistry, my Lord, we that set up for Poets, attempt to palliate one presumption by another. As I have strong temptations to plead for the honour I now assume; so, I hope, I am not totally without pretensions to it. As an humble son of that Alma Mater, who has now bestowed on your Grace the most honourable adoption, which maternal approbation had to give, I flatter myself that I stand in some degree of alliance to you; and if there is any thing in these scenes that deserves the name of Genius, I am happy in acquainting the world that I drew it from the same fountain, and, nearly, at the same period with your Grace; though not in the same proportion.

As I only seek, by this offering, to amuse a leisure hour, I have no right either to speak to your Grace, or of your Grace, as a Minister. Nevertheless, my Lord, in these ill-tempered times, I must be allowed to say, that there is some merit, when your fortune needs no addition, and your rank cannot receive any, in standing forth the servant and the sufferer of your country: I say the sufferer, my Lord, because in your station you have to combat not only the envy, but the ingratitude of mankind.

In times of peace the Muses, more especially, look for protection at the thrones of Princes, and in the closets of Ministers. In seasons of public tranquillity, when good order and good humour obtain in a nation, the great may find an ear even for such trifles as I now

lay before you. Did these times, my Lord, answer that description, I should have much to say to your Grace on the subject of the Stage, so applicable to noble uses, and of the low ebb at which Genius now stands, so much in need of cultivation; but these are topics too harmonious for an æra that seems to delight in discord; and all the merit I can claim with your Grace and the public is, that at a time when all other anonymous writers have been scattering the seeds of discontent and disturbance, I have used my best endeavours in the following scenes, to lead such of my countrymen, as have attended their representation, into a short paroxysm of complacency and good humour. I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Grace's most obedient,

And most humble servant,

THE AUTHOR.





THE
AUTHOR'S REMARKS.

AS this comedy is the performance of an author who is yet living ; and as I am probably of all men most unfit to undertake a review of it, I shall dispatch it with as few words as the nature of my engagement will admit of.

Being extremely well supported in its representation by Mr. Woodward and Mr. Yates, in the parts of *Ironsides* and *Sir Benjamin Dove*, its success was flattering as a first attempt at comedy. This the gentlemen who wrote in the newspapers of that time resented in the bitterest terms ; forasmuch as novelty was then so sparingly resorted to by the theatres, that the few who were accepted, found little mercy from the many who were excluded.

The assumed bravery of *Sir Benjamin*, which I am inclined to think is the best feature in the comedy, was suggested to the author by the character in the old play of *The Little French Lawyer*.

There was a peculiarity in Mr. Woodward's style of acting, so striking and so pleasing withal, that he gave an air of originality to *Ironsides*, which it would

be in vain to seek for in the character itself. He was seconded and supported by Mr. Quick, in the humble part of *Skiff*, who was then in the dawn of those comic talents, which in the further progress of his art, opened into so bright and prosperous a display.

This comedy has been occasionally revived, which, I presume, induced the publisher of this copious selection to admit it into his list; and, having found it there, I rather chose to prefix these few lines to it myself, than impose the task of reviewing it upon either of those friends who have assisted me in this undertaking; justly suspicious, that their kindness to its author might, as in the instance of the *West Indian*, be too visible in their remarks upon his works.

R. CUMBERLAND.



PROLOGUE.

*VARIOUS the shifts of authors now-a-days,
For Operas, Farces, Pantomimes, and Plays;
Some scour each alley of the town for wit,
Begging from door to door the offal bit;
Plunge in each cellar, tumble every stall,
And scud, like taylor's, to each house of call;
Gut every novel, strip each monthly muse,
And pillage poet's corner of its news:
That done, they melt the stale farrago down,
And set their dish of scraps before the town;
Boldly invite you to their pilfer'd store,
Cram you, then wonder you can eat no more.*

*Some, in our English classics deeply read,
Ransack the tombs of the illustrious dead;
Hackney the muse of Shakspeare o'er and o'er,
From shoulder to the flank, all drench'd in gore.*

*Others, to foreign climes and kingdoms roam,
To search for what is better found at home:
The recreant Bard, oh! scandal to the age!
Gleans the vile refuse of the Gallie Stage.*

*Not so our Bard—To-night, he bids me say,
You shall receive and judge an English play,
From no man's jest he draws felonious praise,
Nor from his neighbour's garden crops his bays;
From his own breast the filial story flows;
And the free scene no foreign master knows:
Nor only tenders he his work as new;
He hopes 'tis good, or would not give it you:
True homely ware, and made of homely stuff,
Right British druggel, honest, warm, and rough;
No station'd friends he seeks, no hir'd applause,
But constitutes you jurors in his cause.
For fame he writes—Should folly be his doom,
Weigh well your verdict, and then give it home:
Should you applaud, let that applause be true;
For, undeserv'd, it shames both him and you.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Men.

Sir BENJAMIN DOVE.
BELFIELD Senior.
BELFIELD Junior.
Captain IRONSIDES.
SKIFF, *Master of the Privateer.*
PATERSON.
Old GOODWIN, *a Fisherman.*
PHILIP, *his Son.*
FRANCIS, *Servant to Belfield Junior.*
JONATHAN, *Servant to Sir Benjamin.*

Women.

Lady DOVE.
SOPHIA, *Sir Benjamin's Daughter.*
VIOLETTA, *Wife to Belfield Senior.*
LUCY WATERS.
FANNY GOODWIN.

Sailors, &c. &c.

SCENE, *The Sea-Coast of Cornwall.*



THE BROTHERS.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A rocky shore, with a Fisherman's Cabin in the Cliff: a violent Tempest, with Thunder and Lightning: a Ship discovered stranded on the Coast. The Characters enter, after having looked out of their Cabin, as if waiting for the Abatement of the Storm.

GOODWIN, PHILIP, and FANNY.

Phil. It blows a rank storm; 'tis well, father, we haul'd the boat ashore before the weather came on; she's safe bestow'd, however, let what will happen.

Good. Ay, Philip, we had need be provident: except that poor skiff, my child, what have we left in this world that we can call our own?

Phil. To my thoughts now we live as happily in this poor hut, as we did yonder in the great house, when you was 'Squire Belfield's principal tenant, and as topping a farmer as any in the whole county of Cornwall.

Good. Ah, child!

Phil. Nay, never droop: to be sure, father, the 'squire has dealt hardly with you, and a mighty point truly he has gained; the ruin of an honest man. If those are to be the uses of a great estate, Heav'n continue me what I am.

Fanny. Ay, ay, brother, a good conscience in a

coarse drugget is better than an aching heart in a silken gown.

Good. Well, children, well, if you can bear misfortunes patiently, 'twere an ill office for me to repine: we have long till'd the earth for a subsistence; now, Philip, we must plough the ocean; in those waves lies our harvest; there, my brave lad, we have an equal inheritance with the best.

Phil. True, father; the sea, that feeds us, provides us an habitation here in the hollow of the cliff; I trust, the 'squire will exact no rent for this dwelling—Alas! that ever two brothers should have been so opposite as our merciless landlord, and the poor young gentleman who they say is now dead.

Good. Sirrah, I charge you, name not that unhappy youth to me any more. I was endeavouring to forget him and his misfortunes, when the sight of that vessel in distress brought him afresh to my remembrance; for, it seems, he perished by sea: the more shame upon him, whose cruelty and injustice drove him to that. But come—the wind lulls apace; let us launch the boat, and make a trip to yonder vessel: if we can assist in light'ning her, perhaps she may ride it out.

Phil. 'Tis to no purpose, the crew are coming ashore in their boat; I saw them enter the creek.

Good. Did you so? Then do you and your sister step into the cabin; make a good fire, and provide such fish and other stores as you have within: I will go down and meet them: whoever they may be, that have suffer'd this misfortune on our coasts, let us remember, children, never to regard any man as an enemy who stands in need of our protection. [*Exit.*]

Phil. I am strongly tempted to go down to the creek too; if father should light on any mischief—Well, for once in my life, I'll disobey him: sister, you can look to matters within doors, I'll go round by the point, and be there as soon as he.

Fanny. Do so, Philip; 'twill be best.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE II.

Re-enter GOODWIN, followed by FRANCIS, and several Sailors, carrying Goods and Chests from the Wreck.

Good. This way, my friends, this way; there's stowage enough within for all your goods.

Fran. Come, bear a hand, my brave lads; there's no time to lose: follow that honest man, and set down your chests where he directs you.

Sail. Troth, I care not how soon I'm quit of mine; 'tis plaguy heavy. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE III.

Enter other Sailors.

1st Sail. Here's a pretty spot of work! plague on't, what a night has this been! I thought this damn'd lee-shore would catch us at last.

2d Sail. Why, 'twas impossible to claw her off: well, there's an end of her—The Charming Sally privateer!—Poor soul!—A better sea-boat never swam upon the salt sea.

3d Sail. I knew we should have no luck after we took up that woman there from the packet that sunk along-side us.

1st Sail. What, Madam Violetta, as they call her? Why, 'tis like enough—But hush, here comes our captain's nephew; he's a brave lad, and a seaman's friend, and, between you and me—*[Boatswain's whistle.]*—But hark, we are call'd—Come along. *[Exeunt Sailors.]*

SCENE IV.

Enter BELFIELD Junior, and FRANCIS.

Bel. jun. That ever fortune should cast us upon this coast! Francis.

Fran. Sir.

Bel. jun. Have the people landed those chests we brought off with us in the boat?

Fran. They have, sir: an old fisherman, whom

we met, has shewn us here to a cavern in the cliff, where we have stow'd them all in safety.

Bel. jun. That's well. Where's my uncle?

Fran. On board. No persuasions can prevail on him to quit the ship, which he swears will lift with the tide: his old crony, the master, is with him; and they ply the casks so briskly, that it seems a moot point which fills the fastest, they or the wreck.

Bel. jun. Strange insensibility! but you must bring him off by force then, if there is no other way of saving him: I think, o' my conscience, he is as indifferent to danger as the plank he treads on. We are now thrown upon my unnatural brother's estate; that house, Francis, which you see to the left, is his; and what may be the consequence if he and my uncle should meet, I know not; for such has been Captain Ironsides' resentment on my account, that he has declared war against the very name of Belfield; and, in one of his whimsical passions, you know, insisted on my laying it aside for ever; so that hitherto I have been known on board by no other name than that of Lewson.

Fran. 'Tis true, sir; and I think 'twill be advisable to continue the disguise as long as you can. As for the old captain, from the life he always leads on shore, and his impatience to get on board again, I think 'tis very possible an interview between him and your brother may be prevented.

Bel. jun. I think so too. Go then, Francis, and conduct the old gentleman hither; I see Violetta coming. [*Exit Francis.*] Sure there is something in that woman's story uncommonly mysterious—Of English parents—born in Lisbon—her family and fortune buried in the earthquake—so much she freely tells: but more, I am convinc'd, remains untold, and of a melancholy sort: she has once or twice, as I thought, seem'd dispos'd to unbosom herself to me; but it is so painful to be told of sorrows one hasn't power to relieve, that I have hitherto avoided the discourse.

SCENE V.

Enter VIOLETTA.

Bel. jun. Well, madam, melancholy still? still that face of sorrow and despair? twice shipwreck'd, and twice rescu'd from the jaws of death, do you regret your preservation? and have I incur'd your displeasure by prolonging your existence?

Vio. Not so, Mr. Lewson; such ingratitude be far from me. Can I forget when the vessel, in which I had sailed from Portugal, founder'd by your side, with what noble, what benevolent ardour you flew to my assistance? Regardful only of my safety, your own seem'd no part of your care.

Bel. jun. Oh, no more of this; the preservation of a fellow creature is as natural as self-defence: you now, for the first time in your life, breathe the air of England—A rough reception it has given you; but be not therefore discourag'd: our hearts, Violetta, are more accessible than our shores; nor can you find inhospitality in Britain, save in our climate only.

Vio. These characteristics of the English may be just; I take my estimate from a less favourable example.

Bel. jun. Villainy, madam, is the growth of every soil; nor can I, while yonder habitation is in my view, forget that England has given birth to monsters that disgrace humanity; but this I will say for my countrymen, that, where you can point out one rascal with a heart to wrong you, I will produce fifty honest fellows ready and resolute to redress you.

Vio. Ah!—But on what part of the English coast is it that we are now landed?

Bel. jun. On the coast of Cornwall.

Vio. Of Cornwall, is it? You seem to know the owner of that house: are you well acquainted with the country hereabouts?

Bel. jun. Intimately; it has been the cradle of my infancy, and, with little interruption, my residence ever since.

Vio. You are amongst your friends, then, no doubt; how fortunate is it, that you will have their consolation and assistance in your distress.

Bel. jun. Madam——

Vio. Every moment will bring them down to the very shores; this brave, humane, this hospitable people will flock, in crowds, to your relief; your friends, Mr. Lewson——

Bel. jun. My friends, Violetta! must I confess it to you, I have no friends—Those rocks, that have thus scatter'd my treasure; those waves, that have devoured them, to me are not so fatal, as hath been that man, whom Nature meant to be my nearest friend.

Vio. What, and are you a fellow-sufferer then? Is this the way you reconcile me to your nation? Are these the friends of human kind? Why don't we fly from this ungenerous, this ungrateful country?

Bel. jun. Hold, madam; one villain, however base, can no more involve a whole nation in his crimes, than one example, however dignified, can inspire it with his virtues: thank Heaven, the worthless owner of that mansion is yet without a rival.

Vio. You have twice directed my attention to that house; 'tis a lovely spot: what pity that so delicious a retirement should be made the residence of so undeserving a being.

Bel. jun. It is indeed a charming place, and was once the seat of hospitality and honour; but its present possessor, Andrew Belfield——Madam, for Heaven's sake, what ails you? you seem suddenly disorder'd—Have I said——

Vio. No, 'tis nothing; don't regard me, Mr. Lewson; I am weak, and subject to these surprises; I shall be glad, however, to retire.

Bel. jun. A little repose I hope will relieve you; within this hut some accommodation may be found: lean on my arm.

[Leads her to the door of the cabin.]

SCENE VI.

-Enter GOODWIN.

Good. Heaven defend me ! do my eyes deceive me ?
'tis wondrous like his shape, his air, his look——

Bel. jun. What is your astonishment, friend ? Do
you know me ? If it was not for that habit, I should
say your name is Goodwin.

Good. 'Tis he ; he is alive ! my dear young master,
Mr. Belfield ! Yes, sir, my name is Goodwin : how-
ever chang'd my appearance, my heart is still the same,
and overflows with joy at this unexpected meeting.

Bel. jun. Give me thy hand, my old, my honest
friend ; and is this sorry hole thy habitation ?

Good. It is.

Bel. jun. The world I see has frown'd on thee
since we parted.

Good. Yes, sir : but what are my misfortunes ?
you must have undergone innumerable hardships, and
now, at last, shipwreck'd on your own coast ! Well,
but your vessel is not totally lost, and we will work
night and day in saving your effects.

Bel. jun. Oh, as for that, the sea gave all, let it
take back a part. I have enough on shore not to envy
my brother his fortune. But there is one blessing,
master Goodwin, I own I should grudge him the
possession of——There was a young lady——

Good. What, sir, haven't you forgot Miss Sophia ?

Bel. jun. Forgot her ! my heart trembles while I
ask you, if she is indeed, as you call her, Miss
Sophia.

Good. She is yet unmarried, though every day we
expect——

Bel. jun. 'Tis enough : Fortune, I acquit thee !—
Happy be the winds that threw me on this coast, and
blest the rocks that receiv'd me ! Let my vessel go to
pieces ; she has done her part in bearing me hither,
while I can cast myself at the feet of my Sophia, re-
count to her my unabating passion, and have one
fair struggle for her heart

[Exeunt.]

SCENE VII.

Enter VIOLETTA.

Vio. Once more I am alone. How my heart sunk when Lewson pronounc'd the name of Belfield! It must be he, it must be my false, cruel, yet (spite of all my wrongs) beloved husband: yes, there he lives; each circumstance confirms it; Cornwall the county; here the sea-coast, and these white craggy cliffs; there the disposition of his seat; the grove, lake, lawn; every feature of the landscape tallies with the descriptions he has given me of it. What shall I do, and to whom shall I complain? When Lewson spoke of him, it was with a bitterness that shock'd me; I will not disclose myself to him: by what fell from him, I suspect he is related to Mr. Belfield—But hush, I talk to these rocks, and forget that they have ears.

Enter FANNY.

Fanny. Are you any better, madam? Is the air of any service to you?

Vio. I am much reliev'd by it: the beauty of that place attracted my attention, and, if you please, we will walk further up the hill to take a nearer view of it. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE VIII.

Part of the Crew enter, with IRONSIDES and SKIFF in the midst of them.

Omnes. Huzza, huzza, huzza!

1st Sail. Long life to your honour! welcome ashore, noble captain.

2d Sail. Avast there, Jack; stand clear, and let his old honour pass; bless his heart, he looks cheerly, howsomever; let the world wag as it will, he'll never flinch.

3d Sail. Not he; he's true English oak to the heart of him; and a fine old seaman-like figure he is.

Iron. Ah, messmates, we're all aground; I have been taking a parting cup with the Charming Sally—She's gone; but the stoutest bark must have an end;

master here and I did all we could to lighten her; we took leave of her in an officer-like manner.

1st Sail. Hang sorrow; we know the worse on't; 'tis only taking a fresh cruize; and, for my part, I'll sail with Captain Ironsides as far as there's water to carry me.

Omnes. So we will all.

Iron. Say ye so, my hearts; if the winds sits that way, hoist sail, say I; old George will make one amongst you, if that be all; I hate an idle life—So, so: away to your work; to-morrow we'll make a day on't.

[*Exeunt sailors.*]

SCENE IX.

IRONSIDES and SKIFF.

Iron. Skiff!

Skiff. Here your honour.

Iron. I told you, Skiff, how 'twould be; if you had luff'd up in time, as I would have had you, and not made so free with the land, this mishap had never come to pass.

Skiff. Lord love you, Captain Ironsides, 'twas a barrel of beef to a biscuit, the wind had not shifted so direct contrary as it did; who could have thought it?

Iron. Why I could have thought it; every body could have thought it: do you consider whereabouts you are, mun? Upon the coast of England, as I take it. Every thing here goes contrary both by sea and land—Every thing whips, and chops, and changes about like mad in this country; and the people, I think, are as full of vagaries as the climate.

Skiff. Well, I could have sworn—

Iron. Ay, so you could, Skiff, and so you did, pretty roundly too; but for the good you did by it, you might as well have puff'd a whiff of tobacco in the wind's face.

Skiff. Well, captain, though we have lost our ship, we hav'n't lost our all: thank the fates, we've sav'd treasure enough to make all our fortunes notwithstanding.

Iron. Fortunes, quotha! What have two such old weather-beaten fellows, as thee and I are, to do with fortune; or, indeed, what has fortune to do with us? Flip and tobacco is the only luxury we have any relish for: had we fine houses, could we live in 'em; a greasy hammock has been our birth for these fifty years: fine horses, could we ride 'em? and as for the fair sex there, that my nephew makes such a pother about, I don't know what thou may'st think of the matter, Skiff; but, for my own part, I should not care if there were no such animals in the creation.

SCENE X.

IRONSIDES, SKIFF, and BELFIELD junior.

Bel. jun. Uncle; what cheer, man?

Iron. Oh, Bob, is it thee? whither bound now, my dear boy?

Bel. jun. Why, how can you ask such a question? We have landed our treasure, sav'd all our friends, and set foot upon English ground, and what business think you can a young fellow like me have, but one?

Iron. Pshaw, you're a fool, Bob; these wenches will be the undoing of you; a plague of 'em altogether, say I; what are they good for, but to spoil company, and keep brave fellows from their duty? O' my conscience, they do more mischief to the king's navy in one twelvemonth, than the French have done in ten; a pack of—but I ha' done with 'em; thank the stars, I ha' fairly wash'd my hands of 'em, I ha' nothing to say to none of 'em.

Skiff. Mercy be good unto us! that my wife could but hear your worship talk.

Bel. jun. Oh, my dear uncle——

Iron. But I'll veer away no more good advice after you, so even drive as you will under your petticoat-sails;—black, brown, fair, or tawny, 'tis all fish that comes in your net: why, where's your reason, Bob, all this here while? Where's your religion, and be damn'd to you?

Bel. jun. Come, come, my dear uncle, a truce to your philosophy. Go, throw your dollars into yon-

der ocean, and bribe the tempest to be still; you shall as soon reverse the operations of nature, as wean my heart from my Sophia.

Iron. Hold, hold, take me right; if by Sophia, you mean the daughter of Sir Benjamin Dove, I don't care if I make one with you; what say'st thou, boy, shall it be so?

Bel. jun. So then you think there may be one good woman however?

Iron. Just as I think there may be one honest Dutchman, one sober German, or one righteous Methodist. Look'e, Bob, so I do but keep single, I have no objection to other people's marrying; but, on these occasions I would manage myself as I would my ship; not by running her into every odd creek and cranny, in the smuggling fashion, as if I had no good credentials to produce; but play fairly and in sight, d'ye see; and whenever a safe harbour opens, stand boldly in, boy, and lay her up snug, in a good birth, once for all.

Bel. jun. Come then, uncle, let us about it; and you may greatly favour my enterprize, since you can keep the father and mother in play, while I——

Iron. Avast, young man, avast; the father, if you please, without the mother; Sir Benjamin's a passable good companion, for a land-man; but for my lady—I'll have nothing to say to my lady; she's his wife, thank the stars, and not mine.

Bel. jun. Be it as you will; I shall be glad of your company on any terms.

Iron. Say no more then. About ship; if you are bound for that port, I'm your mate: master, look to the wreck, I'm for a fresh cruize. [Exeunt.]

ACT II. SCENE I.

The Outside of Sir BENJAMIN DOVE's House. Enter BELFIELD Senior, and LUCY WATERS.

Lucy. WHAT, don't I know you; hav'n't you been to me of all mankind the basest?

Bel. sen. Not yet, Lucy.

Lucy. Sure, Mr. Belfield, you won't pretend to deny it to my face.

Bel. sen. To thy face, child, I will not pretend that I can deny any thing; you are much too handsome to be contradicted.

Lucy. Pish!

Bel. sen. So! so!

Lucy. Hav'n't you, faithless as you are, promis'd me marriage over and over again?

Bel. sen. Repeatedly.

Lucy. And you have now engag'd yourself to the daughter of Sir Benjamin Dove, have you not?

Bel. sen. Assuredly.

Lucy. Let me demand of you then, Mr. Belfield, since you had no honourable designs towards me yourself, why you prevented those of an humbler lover, young Philip, the son of your late tenant, poor Goodwin?

Bel. sen. For the very reason you state in your question; because I had no honourable designs, and he had; you disappointed my hopes, and I was resolv'd to defeat his.

Lucy. And this you thought reason sufficient to expel his father from your farm; to persecute him and his innocent family till you had accomplished their ruin, and driven them to the very brink of the ocean for their habitation and subsistence?

Bel. sen. Your questions, Miss Lucy, begin to be impertinent.

Lucy. Oh, do they touch you, sir? but I'll waste no more time with you; my business is with your Sophia; here, in the very spot which you hope to make the scene of your guilty triumphs, will I expose you to her; set forth your inhuman conduct to your unhappy brother; and detect the mean artifices you have been driven to, in order to displace him in her affections.

Bel. sen. You will?

Lucy. I will, be assur'd; so let them pass.

Bel. sen. Stay, Lucy, understand yourself a little better; didn't you pretend to Sophia that my brother paid his addresses to you; that he had pledg'd himself to marry you; nay, that he had——

Lucy. Hold, Mr. Belfield, nor further explain a transaction, which, though it reflects shame enough upon me, that was your instrument, ought to cover you, who was principal in the crime, with treble confusion and remorse.

Bel. sen. True, child, it was rather a disreputable transaction; and 'tis therefore fit no part of it should rest with me: I shall disavow it altogether.

Lucy. Incredible confidence!

Bel. sen. We shall see who will meet most belief in the world, you or I; choose therefore your part: if you keep my secret, you make me your friend; if you betray it, you have me for your enemy; and a fatal one you shall find me. Now enter, if you think fit; there lies your way to Sophia. [*She goes into the house.*] So! how am I to parry this blow?—what plea shall I use with Sophia?—'twas the ardour of my love—any thing will find pardon with a woman, that conveys flattery to her charms.—After all, if the worst should happen, and I be defeated in this match, so shall I be saved from doing that, which, when done, 'tis probable I may repent of; and I have some intimations from within, which tell me that it will be so: I perceive that, in this life, he who is checked by the rubs of compunction, can never arrive at the summit of prosperity,

SCENE II.

Enter BELFIELD Senior, and PATERSON.

Pat. What, melancholy, Mr. Belfield? So near your happiness, and so full of thought?

Bel. sen. Happiness, what's that?

Pat. I'll tell you, sir; the possession of a lovely girl, with fifty thousand pounds in her lap, and twice fifty thousand virtues in her mind; this I call happy-

ness, as much as mortal man can merit: and this, as I take it, you are destin'd to enjoy.

Bel. sen. That is not so certain, Mr. Paterson; would you believe it, that perverse hussy, Lucy Waters, who left me but this minute, threatens to transverse all my hopes, and is gone this instant to Sophia with that resolution?

Pat. Impossible! how is Miss Waters provided or provoked to do this?

Bel. sen. Why, 'tis a foolish story, and scarce worth relating to you; but you know, when your letters call'd me home from Portugal, I found my younger brother in close attendance on Miss Dove; and, indeed, such good use had the fellow made of his time in my absence, that I found it impossible to counterwork his operations by fair and open approaches; so, to make short of the story, I took this girl, Lucy Waters, into partnership; and, by a happy device, ruin'd him with Sophia.

Pat. This, Mr. Belfield, I neither know, nor wish to know.

Bel. sen. Let it pass, then; defeated in these views, my brother, as you know, betook himself to the desperate course of privateering, with that old tar-barrel, my uncle: what may have been his fate, I know not, but I have found it convenient to propagate a report of his death.

Pat. I am sorry for it, Mr. Belfield; I wish nothing was convenient that can be thought dishonourable.

Bel. sen. Nature, Mr. Paterson, never put into a human composition more candour and credulity than she did into mine; but acquaintance with life has shewn me how impracticable these principles are; to live with mankind, we must live like mankind: was it a world of honesty, I should blush to be a man of art.

Pat. And do you dream of ever reaching your journey's end by such crooked paths as these are?

Bel. sen. And yet, my most sage moralist, wonder-

ful as it may seem to thee, true it is notwithstanding, that after having threaded all these by-ways and crooked alleys, which thy right-lin'd apprehension knows nothing of; after having driven my rival from the field, and being almost in possession of the spoil, still I feel a repugnance in me that almost tempts me to renounce my good fortune, and abandon a victory I have struggled so hard to obtain.

Pat. I guess'd as much; 'tis your Violetta; 'tis your fair Portuguese that counterworks your good fortune; and, I must own to you, it was principally to save you from that improvident attachment, that I wrote so pressingly for your return; but though I have got your body in safe holding, your heart is still at Lisbon; and if you marry Miss Dove, 'tis because Violetta's fortune was demolished by the earthquake, and Sir Benjamin's stands safe upon *terra firma*.

Bel. sen. Pr'ythee Paterson, don't be too hard upon me: sure you don't suspect that I am married to Violetta.

Pat. Married to Violetta! Now you grow much too serious, and 'tis time to put an end to the discourse.

[*Exit.*

Bel. sen. And you grow much too quick-sighted, Mr. Paterson, for my acquaintance. I think he does not quite suspect me of double dealing in this business; and yet I have my doubts; his reply to my question was equivocal, and his departure abrupt—I know not what to think—This I know, that love is a deity, and avarice a devil; that Violetta is my lawful wife, and that Andrew Belfield is a villain.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

PATERSON passes over the Stage.

Pat. All abroad this fine day—not a creature within doors.

Enter KITTY.

Kitty. Mr. Paterson! hist, Mr. Paterson, a word in your ear, sweet sir.

Pat. Curse on't, she has caught me—Well, Mrs. Kitty.

Kitty. Why, I have been hunting you all the house over; my lady's impatient to see you.

Pat. Oh, I'm my Lady Dove's most obedient servant—And what are her ladyship's commands, pray?

Kitty. Fve, Mr. Paterson; how should I know what her ladyship wants with you; but a secret it is, no doubt, for she desires you to come to her immediately in the garden, at the bottom of the yew-tree walk, next the warren.

Pat. The devil she does!—What a pity it is, Mrs. Kitty, we can't cure your lady of this turn for solitude; I wish you would go with me; your company, probably, will divert her from her contemplations; besides, I shall certainly mistake the place.

Kitty. I go with you, Mr. Paterson! a fine thing truly: I'd have you to know that my character is not to be trusted with young fellows in yew-tree walks, whatever my lady may think of the matter—Besides, I've an assignation in another place. [*Exit.*]

Pat. What a devilish dilemma am I in! Why, this is a peremptory assignation—Certain it is, there are some ladies that no wise man should be commonly civil to—Here have I been flattering myself that I was stroaking a termagant into humour, and all the while have been betraying a tender victim into love—Love, love did I say? her ladyship's passion is a disgrace to the name—But what shall I do?—'tis a pitiful thing to run away from a victory; but 'tis frequently the case in precipitate successes; we conquer more than we have wit to keep, or ability to enjoy.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.

Changes to the Yew-tree Walk. Enter BELFIELD Junior.

Bel. jun. Now could I but meet my Sophia—Where can she have hid herself?—Hush; Lady Dove, as I live.

Enter Lady Dove.

Lady Dove. So, Mr. Paterson, you're a pretty gentleman to keep a lady waiting here: why how you stand?—Come, come, I shall expect a very handsome atonement for this indecorum—Why, what, let me look—Ah! who have we here?

Bel. jun. A man, madam; and though not your man, yet one as honest and as secret: come, come, my lady, I'm no tell-tale; be you but grateful, this goes no further.

Lady Dove. Lost and undone: young Belfield!

Bel. jun. The same: but be not alarm'd; we both have our secrets; I am, like you, a votary to love: favour but my virtuous passion for Miss Dove, and take you your Paterson; I shall be silent as the grave.

Lady Dove. Humph!

Bel. jun. Nay, never hesitate; my brother, I know, had your wishes: but wherein has Nature favour'd him more than me? And, since Fortune has now made my scale as heavy as his, why should you partially direct the beam?

Lady Dove. Well, if it is so, and that you promise not to betray me——But this accident has so discompos'd me, (plague on't, say I) don't press me any further at present; I must leave you; remember the condition of our agreement, and expect my friendship——Oh, I could tear your eyes out. [*Exit.*]

Bel. jun. Well, Sir Benjamin, keep your own counsel, if you are wise; I'll do as I would be done by; had I such a wife as Lady Dove, I should be very happy to have such a friend as Mr. Paterson. [*Exit.*]

SCENE V.

Enter SOPHIA DOVE and LUCY WATERS.

Lucy. If there is faith in woman, I have seen young Belfield; I have beheld his apparition; for what else could it be?

Soph. How? when? where? I shall faint with surprise.

Lucy. As I cross'd the yew-tree walk, I saw him pass by the head of the canal towards the house. Alas! poor youth, the injuries I have done him have called him from his grave.

Soph. Injuries, Miss Waters! what injuries have you done him? Tell me; for therein, perhaps, I may be concerned.

Lucy. Deeply concerned you are; with the most penitent remorse I confess it to you, that his affections to you were pure, honest, and sincere. Yes, amiable Sophia, you was unrivall'd in his esteem; and I, who persuaded you to the contrary, am the basest, the falsest of woman kind; every syllable I told you of his engagements to me was a malicious invention: how could you be so blind to your own superiority, to give credit to the imposition, and suffer him to depart without an explanation? Oh, that villain, that villain, his brother, has undone us all.

Soph. Villain, do you call him? Whither would you transport my imagination? You hurry me with such rapidity from one surprise to another, that I know not where to fix, how to act, or what to believe.

Lucy. Oh, madam, he is a villain, a most accomplish'd one; and, if I can but snatch you from the snare he has spread for you, I hope it will in some measure, atone for the injuries I have done to you, and to that unhappy youth, who now—O Heavens! I see him again; he comes this way; I cannot endure his sight; alive or dead I must avoid him.

[*Runs out.*]

SCENE VI.

Enter BELFIELD Junior.

Bel. jun. Adorable Sophia! this transport overpays my labours.

Soph. Sir, Mr. Belfield, is it you? Oh, support me!—

Bel. jun. With my life, thou loveliest of women! Behold your poor adventurer is returned; happy past compute, if his fate is not indifferent to you; rich beyond measure, if his safety is worthy your concern.

Soph. Release me, I beseech you: what have I done! Sure you are too generous to take advantage of my confusion.

Bel. jun. Pardon me, my Sophia; the advantages I take from your confusion are not to be purchased by the riches of the East: I would not forego the transport of holding you one minute in my arms for all that wealth and greatness have to give.

SCENE VII.

Enter Lady DOVE, while BELFIELD Junior is kneeling and embracing SOPHIA.

Lady Dove. Hey-däy! what's here to do with you both?

Soph. Ah!—

[*Shrieks*

Bel. jun. Confusion! Lady Dove here.

Lady Dove. Yes, sir, Lady Dove is here, and will take care you shall have no more garden dialogues. On your knees too!—(The fellow was not half so civil to me.) Ridiculous! a poor beggarly swabber truly—As for you, Mrs.—

Bel. jun. Hold, madam; as much of your fury and foul language as you please upon me; but not one hard word against that lady, or by Heavens!—

Lady Dove. Come, sir, none of your reprobate swearing, none of your sea-noises here; I would my first husband was alive, I would he was, for your sake. I am surprised, Miss Dove, you have no more regard for your reputation; a delicate swain truly you have chosen, just thrown ashore from the pitchy bowels of a shipwreck'd privateer. Go, go, get you in, for shame; your father shall know of these goings on, depend on't: as for you, sir—

[*Exit Sophia.*

SCENE VIII.

As Lady DOVE is going out, BELFIELD Jun. stops her.

Bel. jun. A word with you, madam; is this fair dealing? What would you have said, if I had broke in thus upon you and Mr. Paterson?

Lady Dove. Mr. Paterson ! why, you rave ; what is it you mean ?

Bel. jun. Come, come, this is too ridiculous ; you know your reputation is in my keeping ; call to mind what passed between us awhile ago, and the engagement you are under on that account.

Lady Dove. Ha, ha, ha !

Bel. jun. Very well, truly ; and you think to brave this matter out, do you ?

Lady Dove. Most assuredly ; and shall make Sir Benjamin call you to account, if you dare to breathe a word against my reputation : incorrigible coxcomb ! to think I would keep any terms with you after such an event. Take my word for it, Belfield, you are come home no wiser than you went out ; you missed the only advantage you might have taken of that rencounter, and now I set you at defiance : take heed to what you say, or look to hear from Sir Benjamin.

Bel. jun. Oh, no doubt on't : how can Sir Benjamin avoid fighting for your sake, when your ladyship has so liberally equipp'd him with weapons ?

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE IX.

A Hall. Enter JONATHAN and FRANCIS.

Jon. And so, sir, 'tis just as I tell you ; every thing in this family goes according to the will of the lady : for my own part, I am one of those that hate trouble ; I swim with the stream, and make my place as easy as I can.

Fran. Your looks, Mr. Jonathan, convince me that you live at your ease.

Jon. I do so ; and therefore, (in spite of the old proverb, ' Like master, like man ') you never saw too people more different than I and Sir Benjamin Dove. He, Lord help him, is a little peaking, puling thing ; I am a jolly, portable man, as you see. It so happen'd that we both became widowers at the same time ; I knew when I was well, and have continued single ever since. He fell into the clutches of——Hark, sure I hear my lady——

Fran. No, it was nothing. When did the poor gentleman light upon this termagant?

Jon. Lackaday, 'twas here at the borough of Knavestown, when master had the great contest with 'Squire Belfield, about three years ago: her first husband, Mr. Searcher, was a king's messenger, as they call it, and came down express from a great man about court during the poll; he caught a surfeit, as ill luck would have it, at the election dinner: and, before he died, his wife, that's now my lady, came down to see him; then it was, master fell in love with her: egad, 'twas the unluckiest job of all his life.

Sir Ben. [*Calls without.*] Jonathan! why Jonathan!

Fran. Hark, you are called.

Jon. Ay, ay, 'tis only my master; my lady tells the servants not to mind what Sir Benjamin says, and I love to do as I'm bid.

Fran. Well, honest Jonathan, if you won't move I must; by this time I hope my young master is happy with your young mistress. [*Exit.*]

SCENE X.

Enter Sir BENJAMIN DOVE.

Sir Ben. Why, Jonathan, I say. Oh, are you here. Why cou'dn't you come when I call'd you?

Jon. Lackaday, sir, you don't consider how much easier it is for you to call than me to come.

Sir Ben. I think, honest Jonathan, when I first knew you, you was a parish orphan; I 'prentic'd you out; you run away from your master; I took you into my family; you married; I set you up in a farm of my own, stock'd it; you paid me no rent: I receiv'd you again into my service, or rather, I should say, my lady's. Are these things so, or does my memory fail me, Jonathan?

Jon. Why, to be sure, I partly remember somewhat of what your worship mentions.

Sir Ben. If you partly remember something of all this, Jonathan, don't entirely forget to come when I call.

Iron. [*Without.*] Hoy there! within! what nobody stirring! all hands asleep! all under the hatches!

Sir Ben. Hey-day, who the dickens have we got here?—Old Captain Ironsides as I'm a sinner; who could have thought of this?—Run to the door, good Jonathan—nay, hold, there's no escaping now:—What will become of me?—he'll ruin every thing; and throw the whole house into confusion.

Enter Captain IRONSIDES.

Iron. What, Sir Ben! my little knight of Malta! give me a buss, my boy. Hold, hold, sure I'm out of my reckoning: let me look a little nearer; why, what mishap has befallen you, that you heave out these signals of distress.

Sir Ben. I'm heartily glad to see thee, my old friend; but a truce to your sea-phrases, for I don't understand them. What signals of distress have I about me?

Iron. Why, that white flag there at your main top-mast head: in plain English, what dost do with that clout about thy pate?

Sir Ben. Clout do you call it? 'Tis a little *en dishabille*, indeed: but there's nothing extraordinary, I take it, in a man's wearing his gown and cap in a morning; 'tis the dress I usually choose to study in.

Iron. And this hall is your library, is it? Ah! my old friend, my old friend. But, come, I want to have a little chat with you, and thought to have dropt in at pudding-time, as they say; for though it may be morning with thee, Sir Ben, 'tis mid-day with the rest of the world.

Sir Ben. Indeed, is it so late?—But I was fallen upon an agreeable *tête à tête* with Lady Dove, and hardly knew how the time passed.

Iron. Come, come, 'tis very clear how your time has passed; but what occasion is there for this fellow's being privy to our conversation—Why don't the lubber stir? What does the fat lazy oaf stand staring at?

Sir Ben. What shall I say now?—Was ever any

thing so distressing?—Why, that's Jonathan, captain; don't you remember your old friend Jonathan?

Jon. I hope your honour's in good health; I'm glad to see your honour come home again.

Iron. Honest Jonathan, I came to visit your master, and not you; if you'll go and hasten dinner, and bring Sir Benjamin his periwig and clothes, you'll do me a very acceptable piece of service; for to tell you the truth, my friend, I hav'n't had a comfortable meal of fresh provision this many a day. [*Exit Jonathan.*]

Sir Ben. Foregad, you're come to the wrong house to find one. [*Aside.*]

Iron. And so, Sir Knight, knowing I was welcome, and having met with a mishap here, upon your coast, I am come to taste your good cheer, and pass an evening with you over a tiff of punch.

Sir Ben. The devil you are! [*Aside.*] This is very kind of you: there is no man in England, Captain Ironsides, better pleas'd to see his friends about him than I am.

Iron. Ay, ay, if I didn't think I was welcome, I shou'dn't ha' come.

Sir Ben. You may be assur'd you are welcome.

Iron. I am assur'd.

Sir Ben. You are, by my soul: take my word for it, you are.

Iron. Well, well, what need of all this ceremony about a meal's meat? Who doubts you?

Sir Ben. You need not doubt me, believe it; I'll only step out, and ask my lady what time she has order'd dinner; or whether she has made any engagement I'm not appriz'd of.

Iron. No, no; engagement!—How can that be, and you in this pickle?—Come, come, sit down; dinner won't come the quicker for your enquiry: and now tell me how does my god-daughter Sophia?

Sir Ben. Thank you, heartily, captain, my daughter's well in health.

Iron. That's well, and how fares your fine new wife?—How goes on matrimony?—Fond as ever,

my little amorous Dove; always billing, always cooing?

Sir Ben. No, captain, no; we are totally alter'd in that respect; we shew no fondness now before company; my lady is so delicate in that particular, that, from the little notice she takes of me in public, you would scarce believe we were man and wife.

Iron. Ha, ha, ha! why, 'tis the very circumstance that would confirm it; but I'm glad to hear it; for of all things under the sun, I most nauseate your nuptial familiarities; and tho' you remember I was fool enough to dissuade you from this match, I'm rejoic'd to hear you manage so well and so wisely.

Sir Ben. No man happier in this life, captain, no man happier; one thing is only wanting; had the kind stars but crown'd our endearments—

Iron. What, my lady don't breed then?

Sir Ben. Hush, hush! for Heaven's sake, don't speak so loud; should my lady overhear you, it might put strange things into her head;—oh! she is a lady of delicate spirits; tender nerves, quite weak and tender nerves; a small matter throws her down; gentle as a lamb; starts at a straw; speak loud, and it destroys her: oh! my friend, you are not us'd to deal with women's constitutions; these hypocondriac cases require a deal of management; 'tis but charity to humour them, and you cannot think what pains it requires to keep them always quiet and in temper.

Iron. Ay, like enough, but here comes my lady, and in excellent temper, if her looks don't belie her.

SCENE XI.

Enter Lady Dove.

Lady Dove. What's to do now, Sir Benjamin?—What's the matter that you send for your clothes in such a hurry? Can't you be contented to remain as you are? Your present dress is well enough to stay at home in, and I don't know that you have any call out of doors.

Iron. Gentle as a lamb, Sir Benjamin.

Sir Ben. This attention of yours, my dear, is be.

yond measure flattering! I am infinitely beholden to you; but you are so taken up with your concern on my account, that you overlook our old friend and neighbour, Captain Ironsides.

Lady Dove. Sir Benjamin, you make yourself quite ridiculous: this folly is not to be endur'd; you are enough to tire the patience of any woman living.

Sir Ben. She's quite discompos'd, all in a flutter for fear I should take cold by changing my dress.

Iron. Yes, I perceive she has exceeding weak nerves. You are much in the right to humour her.

Lady Dove. Sir Benjamin Dove, if you mean that I should stay a minute longer in this house, I insist upon your turning that old porpoise out of it: is it not enough to bring your nauseous sea companions within these doors, but must I be compell'd to entertain 'em? Foh! I shan't get the scent of his tar-jacket out of my nostrils this fortnight..

Sir Ben. Hush, my dear lady Dove, for Heaven's sake, don't shame and expose me in this manner; how can I possibly turn an honest gentleman out of my doors, who has given me no offence in life?

Lady Dove. Marry, but he has though, and great offence too; I tell you, Sir Benjamin, you are made a fool of.

Sir Ben. Nay; now, my dear sweet love, be compos'd.

Lady Dove. Yes, forsooth, and let a young rambling raking prodigal run away with your daughter.

Sir Ben. How! what!

Lady Dove. A fine thing, truly, to be compos'd—

Iron. Who is it your ladyship suspects of such a design?

Lady Dove. Who, sir? why, who but your nephew Robert? Yon flatier'd us with a false hope he was dead; but, to our sorrow, we find him alive, and return'd; and now you are cajoling this poor simple unthinking man, while your wild Indian, your savage there, is making off with his daughter.

Sir Ben. Mercy on us! what am I to think of all this!

Iron. What are you to think! Why, that it's a lie; that you're an ass; and that your wife is a termagant. My nephew is a lad of honour, and scorns to run away with any man's daughter, or wife either, tho' I think, there's little danger of that here—As for me, sooner than mess with such a vixen, I'd starve: and so, Sir Benjamin, I wish you a good stomach to your dinner. [Exit.

SCENE XII.

Sir BENJAMIN DOVE, and Lady DOVE.

Lady Dove. Insolent, unmannerly brute, was ever the like heard? And you to stand tamely by: I declare I've a great mind to raise the servants upon him, since I have no other defenders. Thus am I for ever treated by your scurvy companions.

Sir Ben. Be pacified, my dear; am I in fault? But for Heaven's sake, what is become of my daughter?

Lady Dove. Yes, you can think of your daughter; but she is safe enough for this turn; I have taken care of her for one while, and thus I am rewarded for it. Am I a vixen, am I a termagant? Oh, had my first husband, had my poor, dear, dead Mr. Searcher heard such a word, he would have rattled him——But he——What do I talk of? he was a man: yes, yes, he was, indeed, a man——As for you——

Sir Ben. Strain the comparison no farther, Lady Dove; there are particulars, I dare say, in which I fall short of Mr. Searcher.

Lady Dove. Short of him! I'll tell you what, Sir Benjamin, I valued the dear greyhound that hung at his button-hole more than I do all the foolish trinkets your vanity has lavish'd on me.

Sir Ben. Your ladyship, doubtless, was the paragon of wives: I well remember, when the poor man laid ill at my borough of Knavestown, how you came flying on the wings of love, by the Exeter waggon, to visit him before he died.

Lady Dove. I understand your sneer, sir, and I despise it: there is one condition only upon which you may regain my forfeited opinion; young Belfield, who, with this old fellow, has designs in hand of a dangerous nature, has treated me with an indignity still greater than what you have now been a witness to. Shew yourself a man upon this occasion, Sir Benjamin.

Sir Ben. Any thing, dearest, for peace sake.

Lady Dove. Peace sake! It is war, and not peace, which I require——But come, if you will walk this way, I'll lay the matter open to you. [Exeunt.]

ACT III. SCENE I.

The Sea-Shore before GOODWIN'S Cabin. Enter VIOLETTA and FANNY.

Violetta. And when is this great match of Mr. Belfield's to be?

Fanny. Alas! madam, we look to hear of it every day.

Vio. You seem to consider this event, child, as a misfortune to yourself: however others may be affected by Mr. Belfield's marrying Miss Dove, to you I conceive it must be matter of indifference.

Fanny. I have been taught, madam, to consider no event as matter of indifference to me, by which good people are made unhappy. Miss Sophy is the best young lady living; Mr. Belfield is——

Vio. Hold, Fanny; do step into the house; in my writing-box you will find a letter seal'd, but without a direction; bring it to me. [Exit Fanny.] I have been writing to this base man, for I want fortitude to support an interview. What, if I unbosom'd myself to this girl, and intrusted the letter to her conveyance? She seems exceedingly honest, and, for one of so mean a condition, uncommonly sensible; I think I may safely confide in her.——Well, Fanny.

Enter FANNY.

Fanny. Here is your letter, madam.

Vio. I thank you; I trouble you too much; but thou art a good-natur'd girl, and your attention to me shall not go unrewarded.

Fanny. I am happy to wait upon you; I wish I could do or say any thing to divert you; but my discourse can't be very amusing to a lady of your sort; and talking of this wedding seems to have made you more melancholy than you was before.

Vio. Come hither, child; you have remarked my disquietude, I will now disclose to you the occasion of it: you seem interested for Miss Dove; I too am touch'd with her situation! you tell me she is the best young lady living.

Fanny. Oh! madam, if it were possible for an angel to take a human shape, she must be one.

Vio. 'Tis very well; I commend your zeal; you are speaking now of the qualities of her mind.

Fanny. Not of them alone; she has not only the virtues, but the beauties of an angel.

Vio. Indeed! Pray tell me, is she so very handsome?

Fanny. As fine a person as you could wish to see.

Vio. Tall?

Fanny. About your size, or rather taller.

Vio. Fair, or dark complexion?

Fanny. Of a most lovely complexion, 'tis her greatest beauty, and all pure nature, I'll be answerable; then her eyes are so soft, and so smiling; and, as for her hair——

Vio. Hey-day! why, where are you rambling, child? I am satisfied; I make no doubt she is a consummate beauty, and that Mr. Belfield loves her to distraction. [*Aside.*] I don't like this girl so well as I did; she is a great talker; I am glad I did not disclose my mind to her; I'll go in and determine on some expedient. [*Exit.*]

Fanny. Alas! poor lady! as sure as can be she has

been cross'd in love: nothing in this world besides could make her so miserable; but sure I see Mr. Francis; if falling in love leads to such misfortunes, 'tis fit I should get out of his way. [Exit.

SCENE II.

Enter FRANCIS and PHILIP.

Fran. Wasn't that your sister, Philip, that ran into the cabin.

Phil. I think it was.

Fran. You've made a good day's work on't: the weather coming about so fair, I think we've scarce lost any thing of value but the ship. Didn't you meet the old captain as you came down to the creek?

Phil. I did; he has been at Sir Benjamin Dove's here, at Cropley Castle, and is come back in a curious humour.

Fran. So! so! I attended my young master thither at the same time; how came they not to return together?

Phil. That I can't tell.—Come, let's go in and refresh ourselves. [Exeunt.

SCENE III.

Enter SOPHIA DOVE and LUCY WATERS.

Soph. Indeed, and indeed, Miss Lucy Waters, these are strong facts which you tell me; and I do believe, no prudent woman would engage with a man of Mr. Andrew Belfield's disposition: but what course am I to follow; and how am I to extricate myself from the embarrassments of my situation?

Lucy. Truly, madam, you have but one refuge that I know of.

Soph. And that lies in the arms of a young adventurer. O Lucy, Lucy, this is a flattering prescription; calculated rather to humour the patient, than to remove the disease.

Lucy. Nay, but if there is a necessity for your taking this step——

Soph. Ay, necessity is grown strangely commo-

dious of late, and always compels us to do the very thing we have most a mind to.

Lucy. Well, madam, but common humanity to young Mr. Belfield—You must allow he has been hardly treated.

Soph. By me, Lucy?

Lucy. Madam!—No, madam, not by you; but 'tis charity to heal the wounded, though you have not been a party in the fray.

Soph. I grant you!—You are a true female philosopher; you would let charity recommend you a husband, and a husband recommend you to charity—But I won't reason upon the matter; at least, not in the humour I am in now; nor at this particular time: no, Lucy, nor in this particular spot; for here it was, at this very hour yesterday evening, young Belfield surpris'd me.

Lucy. And see, madam, punctual to the same lucky moment he comes again; let him plead his own cause; you need fear no interruption; my lady has too agreeable an engagement of her own, to endeavour at disturbing those of other people. [Exit Lucy.]

SCENE IV.

Enter BELFIELD Junior.

Bel. jun. Have I then found thee, loveliest of women? O! Sophia, report has struck me to the heart; if, as I am told, to-morrow gives you to my brother, this is the last time I am ever to behold you.

Soph. Why so, Mr. Belfield? Why should our separation be a necessary consequence of our alliance?

Bel. jun. Because I have been ambitious, and cannot survive the pangs of disappointments.

Soph. Alas, poor man! but you know where to bury your disappointments; the sea is still open to you; and, take my word for it, Mr. Belfield, the man who can live three years, ay, or three months, in separation from the woman of his heart, need be under no apprehensions for his life, let what will befall her.

Bel. jun. Cruel, insulting Sophia! when I last parted from you, I flatter'd myself I had left some impression on your heart——But in every event of my life, I meet a base, injurious brother; the everlasting bar to my happiness—I can support it no longer; and Mr. Belfield, madam, never can, never shall be yours.

Soph. How, sir! never shall be mine? What do you tell me? There is but that man on earth with whom I can be happy; and if my fate is such, that he is never to be mine, the world, and all that it contains, will for ever after be indifferent to me.

Bel. jun. I have heard enough: farewell.

Soph. Farewell, sagacious Mr. Belfield; the next fond female, who thus openly declares herself to you, will, I hope, meet with a more gallant reception than I have done.

Bel. jun. How, what! is't possible? O Heavens!

Soph. What, you've discover'd it at last? Oh, lie upon you!

Bel. jun. Thus, thus, let me embrace my unexpected blessing: come to my heart, my fond, o'erflowing heart, and tell me once again that my Sophia will be only mine.

Soph. O man, man! all despondency one moment, all rapture the next. No question now, but you conceive every difficulty surmounted, and that we have nothing to do but to run into each other's arms, make a fashionable elopement, and be happy for life: and I must own to you, Belfield, was there no other condition of our union, even this project should not deter me; but I have better hopes, provided you will be piloted by me; for believe me, my good friend, I am better acquainted with this coast than you are.

Bel. jun. I doubt not your discretion, and shall implicitly surrender myself to your guidance.

Soph. Give me a proof of it then, by retreating from this place immediately: 'tis my father's hour for walking, and I would not have you meet: besides, your brother is expected.

Bel. jun. Ay, that brother, my Sophia, that brother brings vexation and regret whenever he is nam'd; but I hope I need not dread a second injury in your esteem; and yet, I know not how it is, but if I were addicted to superstition——

Soph. And if I were addicted to anger, I should quarrel with you for not obeying my injunctions with more readiness.

Bel. jun. I will obey thee, and yet 'tis difficult— Those lips which have thus blest me, cannot dismiss me without——

Soph. Nay, Mr. Belfield, don't you——well then——Mercy upon us! who's coming here?

Bel. jun. How—oh, yes! never fear; 'tis a friend; 'tis Violetta; 'tis a lady that I——

Soph. That you what, Mr. Belfield?—What lady is it? I never saw her in my life before.

Bel. jun. No, she is a foreigner, born in Portugal, though of an English family: the packet in which she was coming to England, founder'd along-side of our ship, and I was the instrument of saving her life: I interest myself much in her happiness, and I beseech you, for my sake, to be kind to her. [*Exit.*]

Soph. He interests himself much in her happiness; he beseeches me, for his sake, to be kind to her.—What am I to judge of all this?

SCENE V.

Enter VIOLETTA.

Vio. Madam, I ask pardon for this intrusion; but I have business with you of a nature that—I presume I'm not mistaken; you are the young lady I have been directed to, the daughter of Sir Benjamin Dove?

Soph. I am, madam; but won't you please to repose yourself in the house? I understand you are a stranger in this country. May I beg to know what commands you have for me? Mr. Belfield has made me acquainted with some circumstances relative to your story; and, for his sake, madam, I shall be proud to render you any service in my power.

Vio. For Mr. Belfield's sake, did you say, madam? Has Mr. Belfield named me to you, madam?

Soph. Is there any wonder in that, pray?

Vio. No, none at all. In any man else such confidence would surprise me; but in Mr. Belfield 'tis natural; there is no wondering at what he does.

Soph. You must pardon me: I find we think differently of Mr. Belfield. He left me but this minute, and in the kindest terms recommended you to my friendship.

Vio. 'Twas he then that parted from you as I came up—I thought so; but I was too much agitated to observe him—and I am confident he is too guilty to dare to look upon me.

Soph. Why so, madam? For Heaven's sake, inform me what injuries you have received from Mr. Belfield; I must own to you I am much interested in finding him to be a man of honour.

Vio. I know your situation, madam, and I pity it. Providence has sent me here, in time, to save you, and to tell you——

Soph. What? To tell me what? Oh! speak, or I shall sink with apprehension.

Vio. To tell you, that he is——my husband.

Soph. Husband! your husband? What do I hear? Ungenerous, base, deceitful Belfield! I thought he seem'd confounded at your appearance; every thing confirms his treachery; and I cannot doubt the truth of what you tell me.

Vio. A truth it is, madam, that I must ever reflect on with the most sorrowful regret.

Soph. Come, let me beg you to walk towards the house: I ask no account of this transaction of Mr. Belfield's; I would fain banish his name from my memory for ever, and you shall this instant be a witness to his peremptory dismissal. [Exit.]

SCENE VI.

Enter BELFIELD Junior, and PATERSON.

Bel, jun. And so, sir, these are her ladyship's commands, are they?

Pat. This is what I am commission'd by Lady Dove to tell you : what report shall I make to her ?

Bel. jun. Even what you please, Mr. Paterson ; mould it and model it to your liking ; put as many palliatives as you think proper, to sweeten it to her ladyship's taste ; so you do but give her to understand that I neither can nor will abandon my Sophia. — Cease to think of her, indeed ! — What earthly power can exclude her idea from my thoughts ? I am surpris'd Lady Dove should think of sending me such a message ; and I wonder, sir, that you should consent to bring it.

Pat. Sir !

Bel. jun. Nay, Mr. Paterson, don't assume such a menacing air ; nor practise on my temper too far in this business : I know both your situation and my own : consider, sir, mine is a cause that would animate the most dastardly spirit ; yours is enough to damp the most courageous. *[Exit.]*

Pat. A very short and sententious gentleman : but there is truth in his remark ; mine is but a sorry commission, after all : the man's in the right to fight for his mistress ; she's worth the venture ; and if there were no way else to get quit of mine, I should be in the right to fight too ; egad, I don't see why aversion shou'dn't make me as desperate as love makes him. Hell and fury ! here comes my Venus.

SCENE VII.

Enter Lady Dove.

Lady Dove. Well, Paterson, what says the fellow to my message ?

Pat. Says, madam ! I'm asham'd to tell you what he says : he's the arrantest boatswain that ever I conversed with.

Lady Dove. But tell me what he says.

Pat. Every thing that scandal and scurrility can utter against you.

Lady Dove. Against me ! What could he say against me ?

Pat. Modesty forbids me to tell you.

Lady Dove. Oh, the vile reprobate! I, that have been so guarded in my conduct, so discreet in my partialities, as to keep 'em secret, even from my own husband; but I hope he didn't venture to abuse my person.

Pat. No, madam, no; had he proceeded to such lengths, I cou'dn't in honour have put up with it: I hope I have more spirit than to suffer any reflection, upon your ladyship's personal accomplishments.

Lady Dove. Well; but did you say nothing in defence of my reputation?

Pat. Nothing.

Lady Dove. No!

Pat. Not a syllable. Trust me for that: 'tis the wisest way, upon all tender topics to be silent; for he who takes upon him to defend a lady's reputation, only publishes her favours to the world; and, therefore, I would always leave that office to a husband.

Lady Dove. 'Tis true; and, if Sir Benjamin had any heart——

Pat. Come, come, my dear lady, don't be too severe upon Sir Benjamin; many men of no better appearance than Sir Benjamin have shewn themselves perfect heroes: I know a whole family, that, with the limbs of ladies, have the hearts of lions.—Who can tell but your husband may be one of this sort?

Lady Dove. Ah!——

Pat. Well, but try him; tell him how you have been used, and see what his spirit will prompt him to do.—Apropos! here the little gentleman comes; if he won't fight, 'tis but what you expect; if he will, who can tell where a lucky arrow may hit? [*Exit.*]

SCENE VIII.

Enter Sir BENJAMIN DOVE.

Lady Dove. Sir Benjamin, I want to have a little discourse in private with you.

Sir Ben. With me, my lady?

Lady Dove. With you, Sir Benjamin: 'tis upon a

matter of a very serious nature : pray sit down by me. I don't know how it is, my dear, but I have observ'd of late, with much concern, a great abatement in your regard for me.

Sir Ben. Oh, fie, my lady, why do you think so ? What reason have you for so unkind a suspicion ?

Lady Dove. 'Tis in vain for you to deny it ; I am convinc'd you have done loving me.

Sir Ben. Well, now, I vow, my dear, as I am a sinner, you do me wrong,

Lady Dove. Look'e, Sir Benjamin, love like mine is apt to be quick-sighted ; and I am persuaded, I am not deceiv'd in my observation.

Sir Ben. Indeed, and indeed, my Lady Dove, you accuse me wrongfully.

Lady Dove. Mistake me not, my dear ; I do not accuse you, I accuse myself ; I am sensible there are faults and imperfections in my temper.

Sir Ben. Oh ! trifles, my dear ; mere trifles.

Lady Dove. Come, come, I know you have led but an uncomfortable life of late ; and, I am afraid, I have been innocently, in some degree, the cause of it.

Sir Ben. Far be it from me to contradict your ladyship, if you are pleas'd to say so.

Lady Dove. I am sure it has been as I say ; my over-fondness for you has been troublesome and vexatious : you hate confinement, I know you do ; you are a man of spirit, and form'd to figure in the world.

Sir Ben. Oh ! you flatter me.

Lady Dove. Nay, nay, there's no disguising it : you sigh for action ; your looks declare it : this alteration in your habit and appearance puts it out of doubt ; there is a certain quickness in your eye ; 'twas the first symptom that attracted my regards ; and I am mistaken, Sir Benjamin, if you don't possess as much courage as any man.

Sir Ben. Your ladyship does me honour.

Lady Dove. I do you justice, Sir Benjamin.

Sir Ben. Why, I believe, for the matter of courage,

I have as much as my neighbours; but 'tis of a strange perverse quality; for as some spirits rise with the difficulties they have to encounter, my courage, on the contrary, is always greatest, when there is least call for it.

Lady Dove. Oh! you shall never make me believe this, Sir Benjamin: you cou'dn't bear to see me ill used, I'm positive you cou'dn't.

Sir Ben. 'Tis as well, however, not to be too sure of that. [*Aside.*]

Lady Dove. You cou'dn't be so mean-spirited, as to stand by and hear your poor dear wife abus'd and insulted, and——

Sir Ben. Oh! no, by no means, 'twould break my heart; but who has abus'd you, and insulted you, and——

Lady Dove. Who? why, this young Belfield that I told you of.

Sir Ben. Oh, never listen to him; a woman of your years should have more sense than to mind what such idle young fleerers can say of you.

Lady Dove. [*Rising.*] My years, Sir Benjamin!—Why, you are more intolerable than he is but let him take his course; let him run away with your daughter; it shall be no further concern of mine to prevent him.

Sir Ben. No, my dear, I have done that effectually.

Lady Dove. How so, pray?

Sir Ben. By taking care he sha'n't run away with my estate at the same time. Some people lock their daughters up to prevent their eloping; I've gone a wiser way to work with mine, let her go loose, and lock'd up her fortune.

Lady Dove. And, o' my conscience, I believe you mean to do the same by your wife, turn her loose upon the world, as you do your daughter; leave her to the mercy of every free-booter; let her be vilified and abused; her honour, her reputation, mangled and torn by every paltry privateering fellow that fortune casts upon your coasts.

Sir Ben. Hold, my lady, hold! young Belfield didn't glance at your reputation, I hope; did he?

Lady Dove. Indeed but he did though, and therein I think every wife has a title to her husband's protection.

Sir Ben. True, my dear, 'tis our duty to plead, but yours to provide us with the brief.

Lady Dove. There are some insults, Sir Benjamin, that no man of spirit ought to put up with; and the imputation of being made a wittol of, is the most unpardonable of any.

Sir Ben. Right, my dear, even truth you know is not to be spoke at all times.

Lady Dove. How, sir, would you insinuate any thing to the disparagement of my fidelity? But choose your side, quarrel you must, either with him or with me.

Sir Ben. Oh! if that's the alternative, what a deal of time have we wasted!—Step with me into my library, and I'll pen him a challenge immediately.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

The Cabin, with a view of the sea, as before. Enter PHILIP and LUCY WATERS.

Philip. How I have loved you, Lucy, and what I have suffered on your account, you know well enough; and you shou'dn't now, when I am struggling to forget you, come to put me in mind of past afflictions: go, go, leave me: I pray you leave me.

Lucy. Nay, Philip, but hear me.

Phil. Hear you, ungrateful girl; you know it has been all my delight to hear you, to see you, and to sit by your side; for hours I have done it; for whole days together: but those days are past; I must now labour for my livelihood; and, if you rob me of my time, you wrong me of my subsistence.

Lucy. O! Philip, I am undone if you don't protect me,

Phil. Ah! Lucy, that, I fear, is past prevention.

Lucy. No, Philip, no, I am innocent; and therefore, persecuted by the most criminal of men: I have disclosed all Mr. Belfield's artifices to Miss Sophia, and now am terrified to death; I saw him follow me out of the Park, as I was coming hither, and I dare not return home alone; indeed, Philip, I dare not.

Phil. Well, Lucy, step in with me, and fear nothing: I see the 'squire is coming—He who can refuse his protection to a woman, may he never taste the blessings a woman can bestow! [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

Enter BELFIELD Senior.

Bel. sen. Ay, 'tis she! Confusion follow her! How perversely has she travers'd my projects with Sophia!—By all that's resolute, I'll be reveng'd.—My brother too return'd—Vexatious circumstance! there am I foil'd again—Since first I stepp'd out of the path of honour, what have I obtain'd?—O treachery! treachery! if thou canst not in this world make us happy, better have remain'd that dull formal thing, an honest man, and trusted to what the future might produce.

Enter PHILIP.

Bel. sen. So, fellow, who are you?

Phil. A man, sir; an honest man.

Bel. sen. A saucy one, methinks.

Phil. The injurious are apt to think so; however, I ask pardon: as your riches make you too proud, my honesty perhaps makes me too bold.

Bel. sen. O! I know you now; you are son to that old fellow I thought proper to discharge from my farm; please to betake yourself from the door of your cabin; there's a young woman within I must have a word with.

Phil. If 'tis Lucy Waters you would speak with—

Bel. sen. If, rascal! It is Lucy Waters that I would speak with; that I will speak with; and, spite of your insolence, compel to answer whatever I please to ask, and go with me wherever I please to carry her.

Phil. Then, sir, I must tell you, poor as I am, she is under my protection: you see, sir, I am arm'd; you have no right to force an entrance here; and, while I have life, you never shall.

Bel. sen. Then be it at your peril, villain, if you oppose me. *[They fight.]*

Enter PATERSON, who beats down their swords.

Pat. For shame, Mr. Belfield! what are you about? Tilting with this peasant.

Bel. sen. Paterson, stand off.

Pat. Come, come, put up your sword.

Bel. sen. Damnation, sir! what do you mean? Do you turn against me?—Give way, or by my soul, I'll run you through.

Enter Captain IRONSIDES and SKIFF.

Iron. Hey-day, what the devil ails you all? I thought the whole ship's company had sprung a mutiny. — Master and I were taking a nap together for good fellowship; and you make such a damn'd clattering and clashing, there's no sleeping in peace for you.

Bel. sen. Come, Mr. Paterson, will you please to bear me company, or stay with your new acquaintance?

Iron. Oh ho! my righteous nephew, is it you that are kicking up this riot? Why, you ungracious profligate, would you murder an honest lad in the door of his own house?—his castle—his castellum—Are these your fresh water tricks?

Bel. sen. Your language, Captain Ironsides, savours strongly of your profession; and I hold both you, your occupation, and opinion, equally vulgar and contemptible.

Pat. Come, Mr. Belfield come: for Heaven's sake let us go home.

Iron. My profession! Why, what have you to say to my profession, you unsanctified whelp you? I hope, 'tis an honest vocation to fight the enemies of one's country; you, it seems, are for murdering the friends; I trust, it is not for such a skip-jack as thee art to flee at my profession. Master, did'st ever hear the like?

Skiff. Never, captain, never; for my own part, I am one of few words; but, for my own part, I always thought, that to be a brave seaman, like your honour, was the greatest title an Englishman can wear.

Iron. Why so it is, Skiff: ahem!

Bel. sen. Well, sir, I leave you to the enjoyment of your honours; so your servant. Sirrah, I shall find a time for you. *[Belfield is going out.]*

Iron. Hark'e, sir, come back, one more word with you.

Bel. sen. Well, sir——

Iron. Your father was an honest gentleman; your mother, tho' I say it that should not say it, was an angel; my eyes ache when I speak of her: ar'n't you ashamed, sirrah, to disgrace such parents? My nephew Bob, your brother, is as honest a lad, and as brave, as ever stept between stem and stern; a' has a few faults indeed, as who is free? But, you, Andrew, you are as false as a quick-sand, and as full of mischief as a fire-ship.

Bel. sen. Captain Ironsides, I have but little time to bestow on you; if you have nothing else to entertain me with, the sooner we part the better.

Iron. No, sir, one thing more, and I have done with you; they tell me you're parliament-man here for the borough of Knavestown: the lord have mercy upon the nation, when such fellows as thou art are to be our law-makers——For my own part, I can shift; I'll take shipping, and live in Lapland, and be dry-nurse to a bear, rather than dwell in a country where I am to be govern'd by such a thing as thou art.

Bel. sen. By your manners I should guess you had executed that office already: however, lose no time, fit out a new Charming Sally, and set sail for Lapland: 'tis the properest place for you to live in, and a bear the fittest companion for you to keep.

[Exit Belfield and Paterson.]

Iron. Hark'e, Philip, I forgot to ask what all this stir was about?

Phil. Sir, if you please to walk in, I will inform you.

Iron. With all my heart. A pragmatical, impertinent coxcomb! Come, master, we'll fill a pipe, and hear the lad's story within doors. I never yet was ashamed of my profession, and I'll take care my profession shall have no reason to be ashamed of me.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

Enter BELFIELD Junior, and SOPHIA.

Bel. jun. Madam, madam, will you not vouchsafe to give me a hearing?

Soph. Unless you could recall an act no earthly power can cancel, all attempt at explanation is vain.

Bel. jun. Yet, before we part for ever, obstinate, inexorable Sophia, tell me what is my offence.

Soph. Answer yourself that question, Mr. Belfield; consult your own heart, consult your Violetta.

Bel. jun. Now, on my life, she's meanly jealous of Violetta: that grateful woman has been warm in her commendations of me, and her distemper'd fancy turns that candour into criminality.

Soph. Hah! he seems confounded! guilty beyond all doubt.

Bel. jun. By Heaven I'll no longer be the dupe to these bad humours: Lucy Waters, Violetta, every woman she sees or hears, alarms her jealousy, overthrows my hopes, and rouses every passion into fury. Well, madam, at length I see what you allude to; I shall follow your advice, and consult my Violetta; nay, more, consult my happiness; for with her, at least, I shall find repose; with you, I plainly see, there can be none.

Soph. 'Tis very well, sir; the only favour you can now grant me is, never to let me see you again; for after what has passed between us, every time you intrude into my company you will commit an insult upon good-breeding and humanity.

Bel. jun. Madam, I'll take care to give you no further offence.

[*Exit.*]

Soph. Oh! my poor heart will break!

SCENE IV.

Enter Sir BENJAMIN DOVE.

Sir Ben. Hey-day, Sophia, what's the matter? What ails my child? Who has offended you? Did not I see the younger Belfield part from you just now?

Soph. O, sir! if you have any love for me, don't name that base treacherous wretch to me any more.

[*Exit.*

Sir Ben. Upon, my word, I am young Mr. Belfield's most obsequious servant: a very notable confusion truly has he been pleased to make in my family. Lady Dove raves, Sophia cries: my wife calls him a saucy impudent fellow; my daughter says he's a base treacherous wretch: from all which I am to conclude, that he has spoke too plain truths to the one, and told too many lies to the other; one lady is irritated because he has refused favours; the other, perhaps, is afflicted because he has obtained 'em. Lady Dove has peremptorily insisted upon my giving him a challenge; but, to say the truth, I had no great stomach to the business till this fresh provocation; I perceive now I am growing into a most unaccountable rage; 'tis something so different from what I ever felt before, that, for what I know, it may be courage, and I mistake it for anger; I never did quarrel with any man, and hitherto no man ever quarrelled with me: egad, if once I break the ice, it sha'n't stop here: if young Belfield doesn't prove me a coward, Lady Dove shall see that I am a man of spirit.—Sure I see my gentleman coming hither again. [*Steps aside.*

Enter BELFIELD Junior.

Bel. jun. What meanness, what infatuation possesses me, that I should resolve to throw myself once more in her way! but she's gone, and yet I may escape with credit.

Sir Ben. Ay, there he is, sure enough; by the

mass I don't like him: I'll listen awhile, and discover what sort of a humour he is in.

Bel. jun. I am asham'd of this weakness: I am determin'd to assume a proper spirit, and act as becomes a man upon this occasion.

Sir Ben. Upon y soul I'm very sorry for it.

Bel. jun. Now am I so distracted between love, rage, and disappointment, that I could find in my heart to sacrifice her, myself, and all mankind.

Sir Ben. Lord ha' mercy upon us, I'd better steal off and leave him to himself.

Bel. jun. And yet, perhaps, all this may proceed from an excess of fondness in my Sophia.

Sir Ben. Upon my word, you are blest with a most happy assurance.

Bel. jun. Something may have dropp'd from Violletta to alarm her jealousy; and, working upon the exquisite sensibility of her innocent mind, may have brought my sincerity into question.

Sir Ben. I don't understand a word of all this.

Bel. jun. Now could I fall at her feet for pardon, though I know not in what I have offended; I have not the heart to move. Fie upon it! What an arrant coward has love made me!

Sir Ben. A coward, does he say? I am heartily rejoiced to hear it; if I must needs come to action, pray Heaven it be with a coward! I'll even take him while he is in the humour, for fear he should recover his courage, and I lose mine.—So, sir, your humble servant, Mr. Belfield! I'm glad I have found you, sir.

Bel. jun. Sir Benjamin, your most obedient. Pray what are your commands now you have found me?

Sir Ben. Hold! hold! don't come any nearer: don't you see I am in a most prodigious passion? Fire and fury, what's the reason you have made all this disorder in my house? my daughter in tears; my wife in fits; every thing in an uproar; and all your doing. Do you think I'll put up with this treatment? If you suppose you have a coward to deal with, you'll find yourself mistaken; greatly mistaken, let me tell

you, sir! Mercy upon me, what a passion I am in! In short, Mr. Belfield, the honour of my house is concern'd, and I must and will have satisfaction.—I think this is pretty well to set in with; I'm horribly out of breath; I sweat at every pore. What great fatigues do men of courage undergo!

Bel. jun. Look'e, Sir Benjamin, I don't rightly comprehend what you would be at; but, if you think I have injur'd you, few words are best; disputes between men of honour are soon adjusted; I'm at your service, in any way you think fit.

Sir Ben. How you fly out now! Is that giving me the satisfaction I require? I am the person injur'd in this matter, and, as such, have a right to be in a passion; but I see neither right nor reason why you who have done the wrong, should be as angry as I who have received it.

Bel. jun. I suspect I have totally mistaken this honest gentleman; he only wants to build some reputation with his wife upon this rencounter, and 'twould be inhuman not to gratify him.

Sir Ben. What shall I do now? Egad I seem to have pos'd him: this plaguy sword sticks so hard in the scabbard—Well, come forth, rapier, 'tis but one thrust; and what should a man fear that has Lady Dove for his wife?

Bel. jun. Hey-day! Is the man mad? Put up your sword, Sir Benjamin; put it up, and don't expose yourself in this manner.

Sir Ben. You shall excuse me, sir; I have had some difficulty in drawing it, and am determin'd now to try what metal it's made of. So come on, sir.

Bel. jun. Really this is too ridiculous; I tell you, Sir Benjamin, I am in no humour for these follies. I've done no wrong to you or yours: on the contrary, great wrong has been done to me; but I have no quarrel with you; so pray, put up your sword.

Sir Ben. And I tell you, Mr. Belfield, 'tis in vain to excuse yourself.—The less readiness he shews, so much the more resolution I feel.

Bel. jun. Well, Sir Knight, if such is your humour, I wont spoil your longing. So have at you.

Enter Lady Dove.

Lady Dove. Ah!

[*Shrieks.*

Bel. jun. Hold, hold, Sir Benjamin, I never fight in ladies' company. Why, I protest you are a perfect Amadis de Gaul; a Don Quixote in heroism; and the presence of this your Dulcinea renders you invincible.

Sir Ben. Oh! my lady, is it you? don't be alarm'd, my dear; 'tis all over: a small fracas between this gentleman and myself; that's all; don't be under any surprise; I believe the gentleman has had enough; I believe he is perfectly satisfied with my behaviour, and I persuade myself you will have no cause for the future to complain of his. Mr. Belfield, this is Lady Dove.

Bel. jun. Madam, to a generous enemy 'tis mean to deny justice, or withhold applause. You are happy in the most valiant of defenders; gentle as you may find him in the tender passions, to a man, madam, he acquits himself like a man. Sir Benjamin Dove, in justice to your merit, I am ready to make any submission to this lady you shall please to impose.—If you suffer her to bully you after this, you deserve to be henpeck'd all the days of your life.

Sir Ben. Say no more, my dear Bob; I shall love you for this the longest hour I have to live.

Bel. jun. If I have done you any service, promise me only one hour's conversation with your lovely daughter, and make what use of me you please.

Sir Ben. Here's my hand, you shall have it; leave us.

[*Exit Belfield Junior.*

Lady Dove. What am I to think of all this? It can't well be a contrivance; and yet 'tis strange, that you little animal should have the assurance to face a man, and be so bashful at a rencounter with a woman.

Sir Ben. Well, Lady Dove, what are you musing upon? you see you are obey'd, the honour of your

family is vindicated: slow to enter into these affairs, being once engag'd, I pertinaciously conduct them to an issue.

Lady Dove. Sir Benjamin, —I—I—

Sir Ben. Here, Jonathan, do you hear, set my things ready in the library; make haste.

Lady Dove. I say, Sir Benjamin, I think—

Sir Ben. Well, let's hear what it is you think.

Lady Dove. Bless us all, why you snap one up so—I say, I think, my dear, you have acquitted yourself tolerably well, and I am perfectly satisfied.

Sir Ben. Humph! you think I have done tolerably well, I think so too; do you apprehend me? Tolerably! for this business that you think tolerably well done, is but half concluded, let me tell you: nay, what some would call the toughest part of the undertaking remains unfinish'd; but I dare say, with your concurrence, I shall find it easy enough.

Lady Dove. What is it you mean to do with my concurrence; what mighty project does your wise brain teem with?

Sir Ben. Nay, now I reflect on't again, I don't think there'll be any need of your concurrence; for, nolens or volens, I'm determin'd it shall be done. In short, this it is, I am unalterably resolved from this time forward, Lady Dove, to be sole and absolute in this house, master of my own servants, father to my own child, and sovereign lord and governor, madam, over my own wife.

Lady Dove. You are?

Sir Ben. I am. Gods! Gods! what a pitiful, contemptible figure does a man make under petticoat government. Perish he that's mean enough to stoop to such indignities! I am determin'd to be free—

PATERSON enters, and whispers Lady Dove.

Hah! how's this, Mr. Paterson? What liberties are these you take with my wife, and before my face? no more of these freedoms, I beseech you, sir, as you expect to answer it to a husband, who will have no secrets whisper'd to his wife, to which he is not

privy; nor any appointments made, in which he is not a party.

Pat. Hey-day? what a change of government is here! Egad, I'm very glad on't—I've no notion of a female administration. [Exit.

Lady Dove. What insolence is this, Sir Benjamin; what ribaldry do you shock my ears with? Let me pass, sir, I'll stay no longer in the same room with you.

Sir Ben. Not in the same room, nor under the same roof, shall you long abide, unless you reform your manners; however, for the present, you must be content to stay where you are.

Lady Dove. What, sir, will you imprison me in my own house? I'm sick; I'm ill; I'm suffocated; I want air; I must and will walk into the garden.

Sir Ben. Then, madam, you must find some better weapon than your fan to parry my sword with: this pass I defend: what, dost think, after having encounter'd a man, I shall turn my back upon a woman! No, madam, I have ventured my life to defend your honour; 'twould be hard if I wanted spirit to protect my own.

Lady Dove. You, monster, would you draw your sword upon a woman.

Sir Ben. Unless it has been your pleasure to make me a monster, madam, I am none.

Lady Dove. Would you murder me, you inhuman brute? Would you murder your poor, fond, defenceless wife?

Sir Ben. Nor tears, nor threats, neither scolding, nor soothing, shall shake me from my purpose: your yoke, Lady Dove, has laid too heavy upon my shoulders; I can support it no longer: to-morrow, madam, you leave this house.

Lady Dove. Will you break my heart, you tyrant? Will you turn me out of doors to starve, you barbarous man?

Sir Ben. Oh! never fear; you will fare to the full as well as you did in your first husband's time: in

your poor, dear, dead Mr. Searcher's time. You told me once you priz'd the paltry greyhound that hung at his button-hole, more than all the jewels my folly had lavish'd upon you. I take you at your word; you shall have your bawble, and I will take back all mine; they'll be of no use to you hereafter.

Lady Dove. O! Sir Benjamin, Sir Benjamin, for mercy's sake, turn me not out of your doors! I will be obedient, gentle, and complying for the future; don't shame me; on my knees I beseech you don't.

Enter BELFIELD Senior.

Sir Ben. Mr. Belfield, I am heartily glad to see you; don't go back, sir; you catch us indeed a little unawares; but these situations are not uncommon in well-ordered families; rewards and punishments are the life of government, and the authority of a husband must be upheld.

Bel. sen. I confess, Sir Benjamin, I was greatly surprised at finding Lady Dove in that attitude: but I never pry into family secrets; I had much rather suppose your lady was on her knees to intercede with you in my behalf, than be told she was reduc'd to that humble posture for any reason that affects herself.

Sir Ben. Sir, you are free to suppose what you please for Lady Dove; I'm willing to spare you that trouble on my account; and therefore I tell you plainly, if you will sign and seal your articles this night, to-morrow morning Sophia shall be yours: I'm resolv'd that the self-same day, which consecrates the redemption of my liberty, shall confirm the surrender of yours.

Lady Dove. O! Mr. Belfield, I beseech you intercede with this dear, cruel man, in my behalf; would you believe that he harbours a design of expelling me his house, on the very day too when he purposes celebrating the nuptials of his daughter?

Bel. sen. Come, Sir Benjamin, I must speak to you now as a friend in the nearest connection; I beg you

will not damp our happiness with so melancholy an event: I will venture to pledge myself for her ladyship.

Sir Ben. Well, for your sake, perhaps, I may prolong her departure for one day; but I'm determin'd, if she does stay to-morrow, she shall set the first dish upon the table, if 'tis only to shew the company what a refractory wife in the hands of a man of spirit may be brought to submit to. Our wives, Mr. Belfield, may tease us, and vex us, and still escape with impunity; but if once they thoroughly provoke us, the charm breaks, and they are lost for ever. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V. SCENE I.

The Sea Coast, as before. Enter GOODWIN and FANNY.

Goodwin. WHAT you tell me, Fanny, gives me great concern, that Mr. Francis should think to seduce the innocence of my child for a paltry bribe: what can have pass'd to encourage him to put such an affront upon you?

Fanny. Till this proposal, which I tell you of, I always took Mr. Francis for one of the best behav'd, modestest young men I had ever met with.

Good. To say the truth, Fanny, so did I; but the world is full of hypocrisy, and our acquaintance with him has been very short.—

Enter FRANCIS.

Hark'e, young man, a word with you! What is it I or my children have done to offend you?

Fran. Offend me! what is it you mean?

Good. When your vessel was stranded upon our coast, did we take advantage of your distress? On the contrary, wasn't this poor hut thrown open to your use, as a receptacle for your treasures, and a repose for your fatigues? Have either those treasures, or that repose, been invaded? Whom amongst you have we robb'd or defrauded?

Fran. None, none; your honesty has been as conspicuous as your hospitality.

Good. Why then, having received no injury, do you seek to do one; an injury of the basest nature—— You see there a poor girl, whose only portion in this world is her innocence, and of that you have sought to——

Fran. Hold; nor impute designs to me which I abhor; you say your daughter has no portion but her innocence; assured of that, I ask none else; and, if she can forgive the stratagem I have made use of, I am ready to atone for it by a life devoted to her service.

Good. Well, sir, I am happy to find you are the man I took you for, and cannot discommend your caution; so that if you like my daughter, and Fanny is consenting——But, soft! who have we got here?

Fran. I wish Mr. Paterson was further for interrupting us just now.

SCENE II.

Enter PATERSON.

Pat. Pray, good people, isn't there a lady with you of the name of Violetta?

Good. There is.

Pat. Can you direct me to her? I have business with her of the utmost consequence.

Good. Fanny, you and Mr. Francis step in and let the lady know. [*Exit Fanny and Francis.*]

SCENE III.

GOODWIN and PATERSON.

Good. If it's no offence, Mr. Paterson, allow me to ask you whether there is any hope of our young gentleman here, who is just returned, succeeding in his addresses to Miss Dove?

Pat. Certainly none, master Goodwin.

Good. I'm heartily sorry for it.

Pat. I find you are a stranger to the reasons which make against it: but how are you interested in his success?

Good. I am a witness of his virtues, and consequently not indifferent to his success. [Exit.

SCENE IV.

Enter VIOLETTA.

Pat. Madam, I presume your name is Violetta.

Vio. It is, sir.

Pat. I wait upon you, madam, at Miss Dove's desire, and as a particular friend of Mr. Andrew Belfield's.

Vio. Sir!—

Pat. Madam!

Vio. Pray proceed.

Pat. To intreat the favour of your company at Cropley-castle upon business, wherein that lady and gentleman are intimately concerned: I presume, madam, you guess what I mean.

Vio. Indeed, sir, I cannot easily guess how I can possibly be a party in any business between Miss Dove and Mr. Belfield. I thought all intercourse between those persons was now entirely at an end.

Pat. Oh! no, madam, by no means; the affair is far from being at an end.

Vio. How, sir! not at an end?

Pat. No, madam; on the contrary, from Sir Benjamin's great anxiety for the match, and, above all, from the very seasonable intelligence you was so good to communicate to Miss Sophia, I am not without hopes that Mr. Andrew Belfield will be happy enough to conquer all her scruples, and engage her to consent to marry him.

Vio. Indeed! but pray, sir, those scruples of Miss Dove's, which you flatter yourself Mr. Belfield will so happily conquer, how is it that ladies in this country reconcile themselves to such matters? I should have thought such an obstacle utterly insurmountable.

Pat. Why, to be sure, madam, Miss Dove has had some doubts and difficulties to contend with: but duty, you know—and, as I said before, you, ma-

dam, you have been a great friend to Mr. Belfield; you have forwarded matters surprisingly.

Vio. It is very surprising, truly, if I have.

Pat. You seem greatly stagger'd at what I tell you: I see you are a stranger to the principles upon which young ladies frequently act in this country: I believe, madam, in England, as many, or more matches are made from pique, than for love; and, to say the truth, I take this of Miss Dove's to be one of that sort. There is a certain person, you know, who will feel upon this occasion.

Vio. Yes; I well know there is a certain person, who will feel upon this occasion; but, are the sufferings of that unhappy one to be converted into raillery and amusement?

Pat. Oh, madam! the ladies will tell you, that therein consists the very luxury of revenge.—But, I beseech you, have the goodness to make haste; my friend Mr. Belfield may stand in need of your support.

Vio. Thus insulted, I can contain myself no longer. Upon what infernal shore am I cast! into what society of demons am I fall'n! that a woman, whom by an act of honour I would have redeem'd from misery and ruin, should have the insolence, the inhumanity, to invite me to be a spectatress of her marriage with my own husband!

Pat. With your husband! What do I hear? Is Mr. Andrew Belfield your husband?

Vio. Ay; do you doubt it? Would I could say he was not!

Pat. Just Heaven! you then are the Violetta, you are the Portuguese lady I have heard so much of, and married to Mr. Belfield: base and perfidious!—Why, madam, both Miss Dove and myself conceived that 'twas the young adventurer with whom you suffered shipwreck, that—

Vio. What! Lewson, the brave generous, honourable Lewson?

Pat. Lewson! Lewson! as sure as can be you mean young Belfield; for now the recollection strikes

me, that I've heard he took that name before he quitted England. That, Lewson, madam, whom we believed you married to, is Robert Belfield, and younger brother to your husband.

Vio. Mercy defend me! into what distress had this mutual mistake nearly involved us?

Pat. Come then, madam, let us lose no time, but fly with all dispatch to Cropley-castle; I have a post-chaise waiting, which will convey us thither in a few minutes: but, before we go, I'll step in and direct these good people to find young Belfield, and send him after us—Old Ironsides and all must be there.

[*Exit Pat.*]

SCENE V.

Vio. Let me reflect upon my fate—Wedded, betrayed, abandoned! at once a widow and a wife. All that my soul held dear, in the same-hour obtained and lost. O false, false Belfield! Strong indeed must be that passion, and deeply seated in my heart, which even thy treachery could not eradicate! Twice shipwrecked! twice rescued from the jaws of death; just Heaven! I do not, dare not murmur; nor can I doubt but that the hand invisibly is stretched forth to save me, and through this labyrinth of sorrow to conduct me to repose.

Enter PATERSON.

Pat. Now, madam, if you will trust yourself to my convoy, I'll bring you into harbour, where you shall never suffer shipwreck more.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.

Sir BENJAMIN DOVE's House. Enter Sir BENJAMIN DOVE and Lady DOVE.

Sir Ben. Upon these terms and stipulations, Lady Dove, I consent to your remaining at Cropley-castle. Enjoy your own prerogative, and leave me in possession of mine; above all things, my dear, I must insist that Mr. Paterson be henceforward considered as my friend and companion, and not your ladyship's.

Lady Dove. Nay, but indeed and indeed, my dear Sir Benjamin, that is being too hard with me, to debar me the common gratifications of every woman of distinction: Mr. Paterson, you know, is my very particular friend.

Sir Ben. 'Tis for his being so very particular, my dear, that I object to him.

Lady Dove. Friendship, Sir Benjamin, is the virtuous recreation of delicate and susceptible minds; would you envy me that innocent pleasure? Why you know, my dearest, that your passion for me, which was once so violent, is now softened and subsided into mere friendship.

Sir Ben. True, my dear; and, therefore, I am afraid lest my love having, by easy degrees, slackened into friendship, his friendship should, by as natural a transition, quicken into love; say no more, therefore, upon this point, but leave me to Mr. Paterson, and Mr. Paterson to me—Go—send Sophia to me—oh, here she comes: your ladyship need not be present at our conference; I think my own daughter surely belongs to my province, and not yours. Good morning to you. [Exit Lady Dove,

SCENE VII.

Enter SOPHIA.

Sir Ben. Well, daughter, are you prepared to comply with my desires, and give your hand to Andrew Belfield this morning.

Soph. Sir!

Sir Ben. My heart is fixt upon this event; I have watch'd late and early to bring it to bear; and you'll find, my child, when you come to peruse your marriage settlement, how tenderly I have consulted your happiness in this match.

Soph. Alas! I should never think of searching for happiness amongst deeds and conveyances; 'tis the man, and not the money, that is likely to determine my lot.

Sir Ben. Well, and is not Mr. Belfield a man? a

fine man, as I take it, he is, and a fine estate I'm sure he has got; then it lies so handy and contiguous to my own; only a hedge betwixt us; think of that, Sophy, only a hedge that parts his manor from mine; then consider, likewise, how this alliance will accommodate matters in the borough of Knavestown, where I and my family have stood three contested elections with his, and lost two of them; that sport will now be at an end, and our interests will be consolidated by this match, as well as our estates.

Soph. Still you mistake my meaning; I talk of the qualities of a man, you of his possessions; I require in a husband, good morals, good nature, and good sense; what has all this to do with contiguous estates, connected interests, and contested elections.

Sir Ben. I don't rightly understand what you would have, child; but this I well know, that if money alone will not make a woman happy, 'twill always purchase that that will.—I hope, Sophy, you've done thinking of that rambling, idle young fellow, Bob Belfield.

Soph. Perish all thought of him for ever! Nothing can be more contrary, more impossible in nature, than my union with young Belfield;—age, ugliness, ill-nature, bring any thing to my arms, rather than him.

Sir Ben. But why so angry with him, child? This violent detestation and abhorrence is as favourable a symptom as any reasonable lover could wish for.

SCENE VIII.

Enter PATERSON.

Pat. Joy to you, Sir Benjamin? all joy attend you both! the bridegroom by this time is arriv'd; we saw his equipage enter the avenue as ours drove into the court.

Sir Ben. Mr. Paterson, sir, I know not if yet your friend is to be a bridegroom; I find my daughter here so cold and uncomplying, for my own part, I don't know how I shall look Mr. Belfield in the face.

Pat. Fear nothing, Sir Benjamin : make haste and receive your son-in-law ; I have news to communicate to Miss Dove, which, I am confident, will dispose her to comply with all your wishes.

Sir Ben. Well, sir, I shall leave her to your tutorage. This obliging gentleman undertakes not only for my wife, but for my daughter too. [Exit.

Soph. I am surprised, Mr. Paterson——

Pat. Hold, madam, for one moment : I have made a discovery of the last importance to your welfare : you are in an error with regard to young Belfield——Violetta, the lady you believed him married to, is here in the house ; I have brought her hither at your request, and from her I learn that the elder brother is her husband ; he, who this very morning, but for my discovery, had been yours also.

Soph. What's this you tell me, sir?——Where is this lady, where is Violetta ; where is young Belfield ?

Pat. Violetta, madam, I have put under safe convey, and by this time your waiting woman has lodged her privately in the closet of your bedchamber : there you will find her, and learn the whole process of this providential escape.——I'll only speak a word to Sir Benjamin, and come to you without any further delay. [Exit Sophia.

SCENE IX.

Enter Sir BENJAMIN DOVE, and BELFIELD Senior.

Sir Ben. Well, Mr. Paterson, what says my daughter ?

Pat. Every thing that becomes an obedient daughter to say ; so that if this gentleman is not made completely happy within this hour, the fault will lie at his door, and not with Miss Sophia.

Sir Ben. This is good news, Paterson ; but I am impatient to have the ceremony concluded ; the bells are ringing, the parson is waiting, and the equipages are at the door ; step up to Sophia, and tell her to hasten ; and hark'e, my friend, as you go by Lady Dove's door, give her a call, do you mind me, only a call at

the door : don't you go in ; she's busy at work upon a large parcel of ribbands, which I have given her to make into wedding favours, she'll be very angry if you go into her chamber. Go, go, get you gone.

[Exit Paterson.]

Bel. sen. How comes it to pass, Sir Benjamin, that Mr. Paterson becomes so necessary an agent in the female affairs of your family ? I confess to you, my pride is wounded, when I find I am to thank him for your daughter's consent to marry me. The man that can prevail upon a woman to act against her liking, what may he not persuade her to do with it ?

Sir Ben. Your remark is just ; Paterson has certainly some secret faculty of persuasion ; and all that can be said is, that 'tis better to see your danger before marriage, than to be feeling it out, as I have done, afterwards.

SCENE X.

Enter Captain IRONSIDES and BELFIELD Junior.

Sir Ben. What, old acquaintance, are you come to rejoice with me on this occasion ?——Bob Belfield too, as I live ; you are both heartily welcome——I could have spar'd their visit notwithstanding. [Aside.]

Bel. sen. My brother here ? vexation !

Bel. jun. Sir Benjamin, I come now to claim your promise of one hour's conversation with your daughter.

Sir Ben. The devil you do !

Bel. sen. Ridiculous !

Bel. jun. To you, sir, obligations of this sort may be matter of ridicule ; but while I religiously observe all promises I make to others, I shall expect others to be as observant of those they make to me.

Bel. sen. Sir, I have a most profound veneration for your principles, and am happy to find your understanding so much cultivated by travel : but in spite of your address, you will find it rather difficult to induce me to wave my right in Miss Dove in favour of a profess'd adventurer.

Bel. jun. Shameless, unfeeling man! an adventurer do you call me? You, whose unbrotherly persecution drove me to this hazardous, this humiliating occupation?

Iron. Sirrah! Bob! no reflections upon privateering; it has lin'd your pockets well, you young rogue: and you may tell your fine brother there, that we have landed treasure enough upon his estate to buy the fee-simple of it: ay, and for what I know, of Sir Wiseacre's here, into the bargain.

Sir Ben. What's that you say, Captain Ironsides? Let's have a word in a corner with you.

Bel. sen. Look'e, sir, if you conceive yourself wrong'd by me, there is but one way—You know your remedy.

Bel. jun. I know your meaning, brother, and to demonstrate how much greater my courage is than yours, I must confess to you, I dare not accept your proposal.

Sir Ben. No, no, I've given him enough of that, I believe.

Iron. Bob Belfield, if I did not know thee for a lad of mettle, I shou'dn't tell what to make of all this:—for my own part, I understand none of your scruples and refinements, not I; a man is a man; and if I take care to give an affront to no man, I think I have a right to take an affront from no man.

Sir Ben. Come, gentlemen, suspend your dispute; here comes my daughter, let her decide betwixt you.

Bel. jun. Let me receive my sentence from her lips, and I will submit to it.

Enter SOPHIA, PATERSON, and Lady DOVE.

Sir Ben. Here's a young gentleman, daughter, that will take no denial; he comes to forbid the banns just when you are both going into the church to be married.

Soph. Upon my word, this is something so extraordinary. What are the gentleman's reasons for this behaviour?

Sir Ben. He claims a sort of promise from me that he should be indulg'd in an hour's conversation with you before you give your hand to his brother.

Soph. An hour's conversation! What little that gentleman can have to say to me, I believe, may be said in a very few minutes.

Bel. sen. I think, brother, this conversation don't promise a great deal.

Soph. In the first place, then, I own to this gentleman and the company present, that there was a time when I entertain'd the highest opinion of his merit. Nay, I will not scruple to confess that I had conceiv'd a regard for him of the tenderest sort.

Iron. And pray, young lady, how came my nephew to forfeit your good opinion?

Soph. By a conduct, sir, that must for ever forfeit not my esteem only, but yours and all mankind's: I am sorry to be his accuser, but I will appeal to you, Mr. Belfield, who are his brother, whether it is reconcilable either to honour or humanity, to prosecute an affair of marriage with one woman, when you are previously and indispensably engag'd to another?

Bel. sen. Humph!

Soph. Yet this, sir, is the treatment I have received: judge, therefore, if I can desire or consent to have any long conversation with a gentleman who is under such engagements; nay, whom I can prove actually married to another woman in this very house, and ready to vouch the truth of what I assert. Judge for me, Mr. Belfield, could you believe any man capable of such complicated, such inconceivable villainy?

Bel. sen. Heav'ns! This touches me too closely.

Sir Ben. Sir, I would fain know what excuse you can have for this behaviour? I can tell you, sir, I don't understand it.

Lady Dove. Oh! fie! upon you, Mr. Belfield! I wonder you are not asham'd to shew your face in this family.

Sir Ben. Who desir'd you to put in your oar?

Iron. Why, sirrah, would not one wife content you? 'Tis enough in all reason for one man; is it not, Sir Benjamin?

Bel. jun. Sir, when it is prov'd I am married, accuse me.

Iron. Look'e, Bob, I don't accuse you for marrying, 'twas an indiscretion, and I can forgive it; but to deny it is a meanness, and I abhor it.

Soph. Mr. Belfield, do you say nothing upon this occasion?

Bel. sen. Paterson, I am struck to the heart; I cannot support my guilt: I am married to Violetta; save me the confusion of relating it: this dishonourable engagement for ever I renounce; nor will I rest till I have made atonement to an injur'd wife. Madam, I beg leave to withdraw for a few minutes.

Bel. jun. Hold, sir; this contrivance is of your forging: you have touch'd me too near: and now, if you dare draw your sword, follow me.

Soph. Hold, gentlemen, you forget the lady is now in the house; she is a witness that will effectually put an end to your dispute: I will conduct her hither.

[*Exit.*

Bel. jun. I agree to it.

Iron. Hark'e, nephew, I shrewdly suspect you have been laying a train to blow yourself up: if once Bob comes fairly alongside of you, you'll find your quarters too hot to hold you: I never yet found my boy out in a lie, and sha'n't tamely see a lie imposed upon him; for while he is honest, and I have breath, he shall never want a friend to stand by him, or a father to protect him.

Bel. sen. Mr. Paterson, explain my story: I will depart this instant in search of Violetta.

Enter SOPHIA and VIOLETTA.

Soph. Stay, I conjure you; stay, turn, and look back upon this lady before you go. [*Presenting Vio*

Bel. sen. My wife!

Sir Ben. Hey-day! here's a turn

Iron. I thought how 'twould be.

Vio. Yes, sir, your faithful, your forsaken wife.

Bel sen. How shall I look upon you? What shall I say? Where shall I hide my confusion? Oh! take me to your arms, and in that soft shelter let me find forgiveness and protection.

Vio. Be this your only punishment! and this!

Bel. jun. Was it then a sister I preserv'd from death?

Bel. sen. What's this I hear? Oh! brother, can you pardon too?

Bel. jun. Be indeed a brother, and let this providential event be the renovation of your friendship.

Bel. sen. What shall I say to you, madam? [*To Sophia.*] Paterson, you know my heart: bear witness to its remorse. By Heav'n, my secret resolution was instantly to have departed in search of this my injur'd wife; but I'm not worthy of even your resentment: here is one that merits and returns your love.

[*Turning to his Brother.*]

Iron. Come, god-daughter, we can never say the fleet's fairly come to an anchor, while the admiral's ship is out at sea. [*Presenting Belfield Junior.*] My nephew here is as honest a lad as lives, and loves you at the soul of him: give him your hand, and I'll broach the last chest of dollars to make him a fortune deserving you. What say you, my old friend?

Sir Ben. Here's my hand! I've spoke the word; she's his own. Lady Dove, I won't hear a syllable to the contrary.

Iron. Then the galleon is thy own, boy.—What should an old fellow like me do with money? Give me a warm night-cap, a tiff of punch, and an elbow-chair in your chimney corner; and I'll lay up for the rest of my days.

Bel. jun. How shall I give utterance to my gratitude or my love?

Enter. GOODWIN, FANNY, FRANCIS, PHILIP, and LUCY.

Sir Ben. So, so! more work for the parson.

Iron. What! Francis, hast thou chosen a mate, and art bound upon a matrimonial cruise as well as thy master?

Fran. Ay, sir; so he is happy as well as myself, and has no objection to my choice.

Bel. sen. What! Are you all assembled to overwhelm me with confusion? Like some poor culprit, surrounded by a crowd of witnesses, I stand convicted and appall'd. But all your wrongs shall be redress'd; your's Goodwin; Philip's; Lucy's: my whole life shall be employ'd in acts of justice and atonement. Virtue, and this virtuous woman, were my first ruling passions.

*Now they resume the social soft controul,
And love and happiness possess my soul.*

[*Exeunt omnes.*]



EPILOGUE.

*WHO but has seen the celebrated strife,
 Where Reynolds calls the canvass into life;
 And, 'twixt the tragic and the comic muse,
 Courted of both, and dubious where to choose,
 Th' immortal Actor stands?—Here we espy
 An awful figure, pointing to the sky;
 A grave, sublime, commanding form she bears,
 And in her zone, an unsheath'd dagger wears.
 On t'other side, with sweet attractive mien,
 The playful muse of Comedy is seen;
 She, with a thousand soft, bewitching smites,
 Mistress of love, his yielding heart beguiles;
 (For where's the heart so harden'd, to withstand
 The fond compulsion of so fair a hand?)
 Oh! would she here bestow those winning arts!
 This night we'd fix her empire in your hearts;
 No tragic passions should deface the age,
 But all should catch good-humour from the stage:
 The storming husband, and imperious wife,
 Should learn the doctrine of a quiet life;
 The plodding drudge, should here at times resort,
 And leave his stupid club, and stummy port;
 The pensive politician, who foresees
 Clouds, storms, and tempests, in the calms of peace;
 The scribbling tribe, who vent their angry spleens
 In songs, prints, pamphlets, papers, magazines;
 Lucius and Anti-Lucius, pro's and con's,
 The list of placets, and of placet-nons;
 The mobbing vulgar, and the ruling great,
 And all who storm, and all who steer the state;
 Here should forget the labours of the day,
 And laugh their cares, and their complaints away.
 The wretch of Jonathan's, who crush'd with shame,
 Crawls lamely out from India's desperate game,
 Safely might speculate within these walls;
 For here, while you approve, stock never falls:
 Pleas'd then, indulge the efforts of to-night,
 Nor grudge to give, if you've receiv'd, delight.*

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